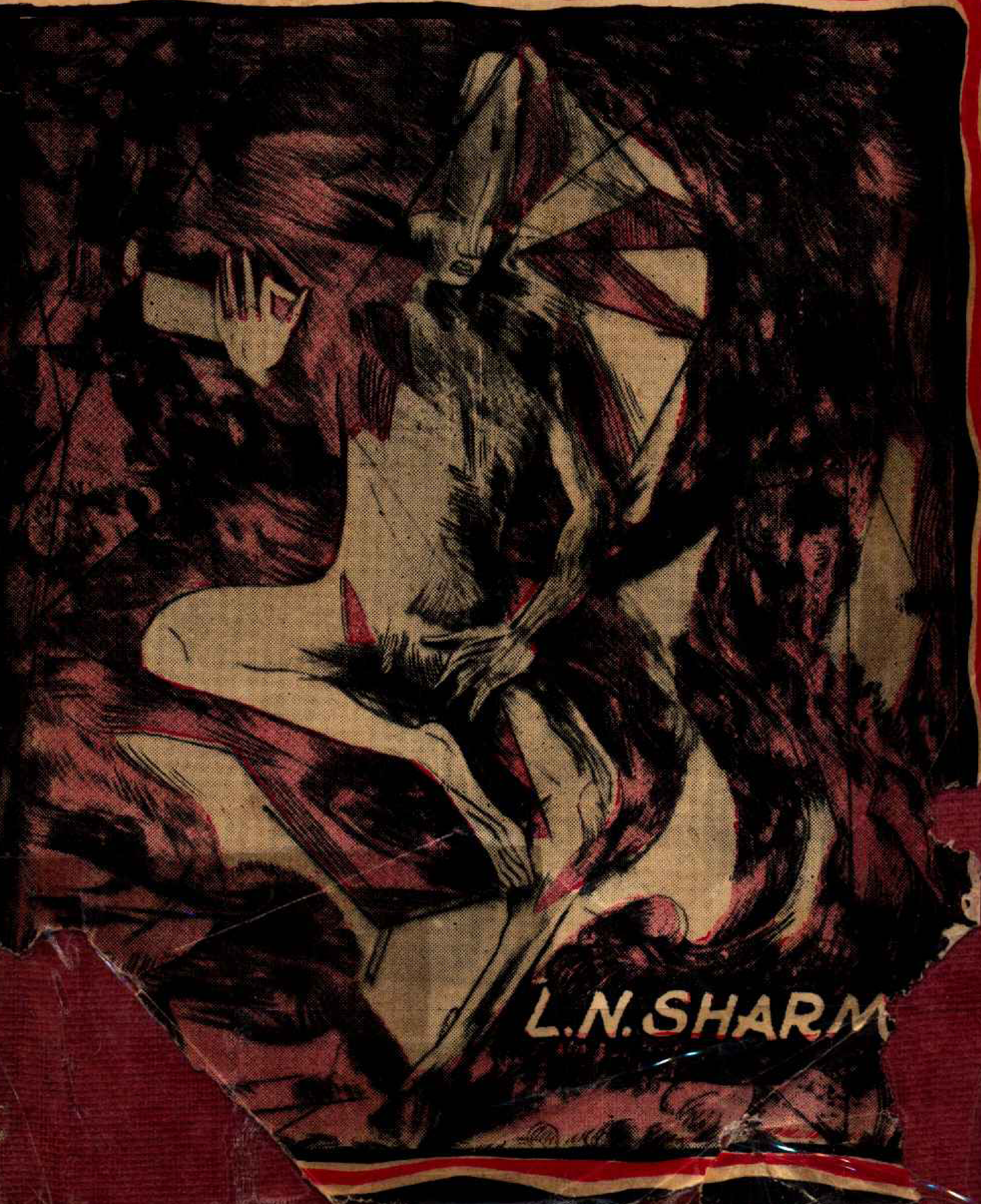
KASHMIR ŚAIVISM



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BY

L. N. SHARMA

Department of Philosophy
Banaras Hindu University
VARANASI

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TO

MY REVERED TEACHERS

MM. Pdt. GOPINATH KAVIRAJ

AND

PROFESSOR T. R. V. MURTI

FOREWORD

Little work has been done on Kashmir Śaivism, and our knowledge of the system has remained scanty and based on secondary sources. This is all the more surprising since the much-advertised philosophy of Sri Aurobindo is largely derived from this and could be described as a reformulation of the Tantra system in modern idiom. This system is also known as Trika, Tantra and the Pratyabhijñā school of philosophy. It could be characterised as an Absolutistic Theism based on the religious life and views depicted in the Śaiva Āgamas.

One should be grateful to Dr. L. N. Sharma for expounding this interesting system of Philosophy and Religion in such an authentic and brilliant manner. He has relied throughout on the original works of the thinkers of this school, namely Somānanda, Utpalācharya, Abhinavagupta, Rāmakaṇṭha, Bhāskara and others. His insight into the tenets of the system and power of philosophical analysis combined with a flair for precise and lucid expression have enabled Dr. Sharma to bring out in fullness and clarity the basic conceptions of this philosophy and their implications.

The most valuable feature of this book is its comparative and critical study of Kashmir Śaivism with the Advaita Vedānta. The distinctive standpoints of these two great systems of thought with regard to the Absolute (Brahman and Śiva), Māyā and Śakti, the status of the Individual Self and the world process and the problems of Bondage, Evil, Spiritual Discipline and Release are drawn with admirable

acumen and understanding. All the other differences stem from the basic conception of Brahman and Śiva. While the Advaita Vedānta understands Brahman to be Pure Being or Consciousness, Self-luminous (svayamprakāśa), it does not invest it with Self-Consciousness of the form: 'I know that I am Brahman.' Self-conscious awareness of oneself, as implying an *other* against which the self-assertion is made, thus belongs to the stage of Īśvara or Saguṇa Brahman as associated with Māyā. In the Pratyabhijña school however, the Absolute Śiva is not only Consciousness (prakāśa or bodha) but is at once Self-Consciousness (Vimarśa, Svatantra) It is Śiva and Śakti rolled into one, in a state of equipoise (sāmarasya, see pp. 279ff). The absolute Śiva integrally contains within himself Creativity, Negation and Immanent Manifestation; Śiva is not only Being but also Agent (kartā) actively and freely unfolding himself and yet is transcendent (viśvamayaṃ viśvottīrṇam ca tattvam). The Vedāntist is more interested in maintaining the purity and transcendence of Brahman than in accounting for creation. Brahman is 'free from', a Free Being, whereas Śiva is 'free to do'. Freedom (svātantrya) means that "consciousness identifies itself with others and negates itself, merges both into one state (as in Sadāśiva) and denies both, which have been merged into one." (p. 194; vimarśohi sarvasahaḥ, param api ātmīkaroti, ātmānam ca parīkaroti, ubhyam ekīkaroti, ekīkṛtam dvayam api nyagbhāvayati ityevamsvabhāvaḥ). The Vedāntist believes that Free Being is the pre-supposition of the Freedom to act, Brahman freely phenomenalises himself as Īśvara (Saguṇa-brahman) to create the world.

The Śaiva absolutist thinks that he has successfully resolved the problem of the world-process without having recourse to the illusion theory by lodging the principle of differentiation within Śiva. It should be interesting to know the answer of the Śaivite on the question of why and how the Lord himself becomes the creature (patireva gṛhīta paśubhāvaḥ). "As Śiva, he is perfectly free from all impurities. But when he

is associated with Māyā and is, therefore, manifest as limited, he is called Paśu, the bound. There is no essential difference between the absolute and the individual." (p. 260). How can Śiva *consciously forget himself*, consciously lose his lordly status and become bound, that is *to be unfree freely*, a contradiction in terms ? Freedom from bondage comes through the realisation, recognition that *I am the Lord*. Does not this cancel or destroy without residue creaturely consciousness and finitude ? If it does, the Śaivite has to accept a case of absolute negation, the Vedāntist's avidyā or māyā which he professes to have discarded. If it does not cancel even partially the finitude, there is no freedom (mokṣa), at least not from the recognition. If the Śaivite accepts negation, his position would be reduced to that of Vedānta. The Māyā of Vedānta correctly interpreted, means the Transcendent Freedom of Brahman to appear or not to appear or appear in other forms.

This and most other philosophical issues are discussed in this admirable book of Dr. Sharma with a wealth of detail and acute analytical skill. He does not take sides, but brings out the distinctions most clearly. All philosophical dispute and discussion results in making the standpoints of the disputants clear and distinct. As Dr. Sharma states : "In the preceding pages, attempt has been made to discuss some of the important points concerning the problem of the absolute and its manifestations. The central problem which persists throghout this discussion is whether the manifestation of the finite process from the infinite is logically possible. And if the process is logically possible, then how and why does it take place ? Finally, how far is it proper to uphold the reality of the process and still maintain the perfection of self-identity of the absolute. At present, it is not our purpose to determine the validity or invalidity of a particular standpoint, nor would it be proper to do so. At the most, we may compare and contrast the two standpoints and thereby try to find out the consistency or inconsistency in them. (pp. 256-7). This attitude is comendable and proper.

Dr. Sharma's work is an excellent and sustained piece of philosophical investigation. I consider it a significant contribution to our understanding of the relative positions of the two great systems of Indian thought, Śaiva Absolutism and Advaita Vedānta. This book will remain, I hope, the standard work on Kashmir Śaivism for quite a while.

November 20, 1972. **T. R. V. Murti**

PREFACE

Kashmir Śaivism, which represents the absolutistic development of Śaiva tradition, may be described as theistic absolutism, *Īśvaradvayavāda*. It includes schools like Krama, Kaula, Pratyabhijñā etc. and provides us an integral vision of reality which is more consistent than many modern forms of integralism and dynamism. It puts forth a wholly dynamic view of life according to which nothing is static or abiding. This system rejects all dualities, bipolarities and conflicts and pronounces a vigorous affirmation. It thus shows the futility of the oft-repeated charge that the Indian Mind is world-negating. For, the whole vast soul of India, as Romain Rolland puts it, proclaims the domination of a sovereign synthesis. There is no negation. All the forces of life are grouped like a forest, whose thousand waving arms are led by Natarāja, the master of dance. The ideal of life is harmonious play of all faculties.

This system has stood the test of times and is fast catching our imagination after a lapse of many centuries. It provides the ultimate remedy for what Jung calls 'the general neurosis of our times.' The new generation of today would find that the mystical Śiva consciousness attained through this path is absolutely free from the evils of drug—induced 'psychedelic nirvāṇa.' The new path recommended in it is known as *anupāya* (effortless), *ānandopāya* (path of bliss), *ātmopāya* (path of self), *paramopāya* (highest path), *sahajopāya* (smooth path), *Pratyabhijñopāya* (path of recognition) etc.

It is rather surprising that so far due attention is not given to this philosophy. Students and laymen both remain in the dark about its fundementals. The present work, besides being a philosophical treatment, aims at a

comparative study. It is the first attempt to expound Śaiva Absolutism in relation to Vedānta advaitism. The absolutistic aspects of the system have been discussed throughout in a critical and comparative manner.

The work is divided into *four parts*. Approaches of Śaiva and Vedānta absolutisms have been analysed in the *first* part. Theories of recognition and error are discussed in the *second* part. The *third* part contains a detailed critical exposition of the nature of absolute reality. Conceptions of self, bondage and liberation have been analysed in the *fourth* part.

The value of the present study is not in the direction of originality, but in the achievement of greater clarity. Its main purpose is to draw the attention of the scholars and to stimulate them for further study. Keeping this aim in view, problems have been presented in simpler form and English equivalents of Saṁskṛta terms have frequently been used. It is also the reason why I have often quoted Sri Aurobindo who is the best modern representative of integralism.

Being an interpretation, such a study may appear to be misleading. However, the risk is worth-while in so far as it may promote genuine understanding and tolerance of different outlooks. The treatment of the problems is neither historical, nor textual. For, I do not have the inclination or the equipment to approach the subject either historically or psychologically. Chronological factors, however, should not count much in a metaphysical discussion.

It is my great privilege to record my gratitude to the various writers, both ancient and modern, from whose writings I have benefited. I am specially indebted to Sri J. C. Chatterjee, Dr. K. C. Pandey, Mm. Pdt. Gopinath Kaviraj and Acharya Ramesvara Shastri for their enlightening exposition of the subject.

My deepest and most sustained obligations are due to my revered teachers Dr. T. R. V. Murti and Mm. Pdt. Gopinath Kaviraj. Dr. T. R. V. Murti, former Head of the Department of Philosophy, Banaras Hindu University, kindly suggested the present subject for research and also agreed to guide me. But for his valuable guidance and kind encouragement this work could not have been complete. I am also deeply indebted to Mm. Pdt. Gopinath Kaviraj at whose feet I learned the secrets of Pratyabhijñā. The present work is dedicated to both these teachers as an humble taken of my gratitude. I am further obliged to Prof. Murti who has kindly agreed to write the foreword of the book.

I am also obliged to Pdt. Mahadeva Shastri (Mahesvarananda), former Principal, College of Oriental Learning, and Acharya Ramesvara Shastri who kindly explained to me many difficult texts. I must also express my gratitude to Dr. R. K. Tripathi, Dr. K. Sivaraman, Prof. J. A. Alston, Prof. Arbinda Basu, Dr. Karan Singh, for the help they have given to me. I am also thankful to my friend Dr. H. Lenaerts who prepared the cover of the book.

The present work is a revised version of the Ph. D. thesis approved by the Banaras Hindu University in 1960. I am obliged to the University authorities for awarding me the Sayaji Rao Gaekwad Fellowship during my research period. Lastly, I am thankful to M/S Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan and the workers of Arun Press for taking interest in the publication of the work.

Varanasi-5
November 1972

L. N. Sharma

ABBREVIATIONS

AS	Advaita Siddhi (Bombay edition)
CPB	The Central Philosophy of Buddhism by T. R. V. Murti George Allen & Unwin, 1960
IPK	Īśvara Pratyabhijñā Kārikā
IPV	Īśvara Pratyabhijñā Vimarśinī Bhāskarī vol. I to III, edited by K. A. Subramania Iyer and Dr. K. C. Pandey, Allahabad 1950
LD	The Life Divine of Sri Aurobindo New York, 1951
MK	Māndūkya Kārikās with Śaṁkara's Commentary, Gita Press, Gorakhpur
NS	Naiṣkarmya Siddhi Bombay 1925
PD	Pañcadaśī N. S. Press, Bombay
PH	Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam Trans. by Jaidev Singh, Motilal Banarasi Das, 1963
PTV	Parā-triṁśikā-Vivaraṇa (K. S. T. S.)
PS	Paramārthasāra (K. S. T. S.)
SB	Śārīrika Bhāṣya (Śaṁkara's commentary on the Brahma Sūtras)
SD	Śiva Dṛṣṭi (K. S. T. S.)
SK	Spaṇda Kārikā
SN	Spanda Nirṇaya (K. S. T. S.)
SSV	Śiva Sūtra Vimarśinī (K. S. T. S.)
TA	Tantrāloka (K. S. T. S.)
TS	Tantrasāra (K. S. T. S.)

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PART ONE

THE TWO APPROACHES

CHAPTER ONE

THE TWO APPROACHES

1. Metaphysics as the Doctrine of Salvation

The 'ego-conflict' generates metaphysical spirit. In its worldly endeavours the finite ego is doomed to meet failures. Defeat and dejection seem to be the very texture of its being. Restlessly striving after 'something,' which by its very nature it cannot 'have,' the finite self is involved in a tragic paradox. Yet, as long as the finite 'energy' is not exhausted, the 'search' continues. However, when due to either exhaustion or strong shock the finite capacity is destroyed, the search is no longer possible. The inevitable wreck appears to be inherent in the very nature of the search—the search for the self in the not-self Sooner or later the individual is bound to realise the utter futility of his efforts.

Recognition of this painful 'situation' constitutes the primary condition of spiritual awakening. Quest for the realisation of truth and the consequent desire to transcend the appearances cannot arise so long as one is entangled in the phenomenal. It is the consciousness of universal misery (*sarvaṁ duhkhaṁ*) and the realisation of the total conflict inherent in the very nature of the 'search' which weaken the lure of the flesh, the hold of the senses and the flights of fancy. As Schopenhauer tells us, it is the knowledge of death and therewith the consideration of the suffering and misery of life that give the strongest impulse to philosophical reflection. When reflective attitude 'descends' various questions about the nature of life and death arise : What is it that persists when the body is dead ?[1] The tree if hewn down springs anew from the old root : What must be

1. Kaṭha Up. I. I.

the root of a man's life in order that it may spring again even though hewn down by death ?[1] Let nobody call himself wise unless he knows what becomes of man after death.[2]

Reflection over such problems leads to a transvaluation of all values. One is fascinated, blinded or deluded by the world—drama only when there is attachment to the appearances. One is no longer spell bound by the 'plot of the play' when out of the melancholy weariness of the 'will to live' arises the desire for the 'inner life.' The inner enlightenment appears significant only when the true aspects of the 'given'—death, disease and misery—are fully realized. To the sensitive vision of a discriminating soul the worldly existence appears to be full of pain and suffering. Unaware of the real nature of the world, the ignorant cling to it ; the wise, on the other hand, being aware of its real nature, discard it. Even an infinitesimal particle of a substance becomes unbearable when placed in the sensitive region of the eye.[3]

Valuation of the given is the first and foremost prerequisite of all metaphysical awakening. There could be no occasion for philosophizing if the 'given' is just taken for granted, i.e. if it is blindly and uncritically accepted. In order that the desire for the 'beyond' may arise, the desire for the 'given' should be exhausted or overcome.

It is followed by an introversion of the ego. When disillusionment is complete and the return to the 'external' is no longer feasible, the ego returns to itself. The self-withdrawal of the ego, its return to itself, is the primary step in the pilgrim's progress. 'Know thyself' is the first and the last injunction of all spiritual disciplines. It has been emphasised both in the East and the West. The leading question in philosophy, according to Gabriel Marcel, is : Who am I ? Like a man standing on burning fire and longing for release, the strife-torn individual restlessly tries

1. Bṛh. Up. III. 9.28
2. Chhānd. Up. V. III. 1-4
3. Yoga Sutra II. 15

to get rid of finitude and attain the true self ; the episodes of *Nachiketā* and *Maitreyī* bear ample evidence of this. Here some vital questions arise : Who am I ? Where from do I come ? Where do I go ? What is my real origin and destiny ? Am I born to be a master or a slave ?

Knowledge of the true nature of the self alone leads to freedom. It is the conviction of the majority of Indian Philosophers that through knowledge alone one can attain release. In India, as against the West, Philosophy is not regarded primarily as a mental gymnastic, but rather, and with deep religious conviction, as our salvation from ignorance which for ever hides from our eyes the vision of reality.[1] Here, in its concern to solve the problem of existence, Metaphysics turns into a doctrine of liberation. It was through philosophy, primarily, that the sages sought to work out their salvation. "In India Philosophy influenced religion even more than the latter did the former."[2] Samkara tells us that all the systems, except the Cārvāka, believe that *Mokṣa* or release is attainable only through perfect knowledge.[3] Scriptures declare that through knowledge alone can nescience with all its effects be destroyed. The same is reiterated by the Smṛtis and confirmed by reason.[4] It is well and good if one attains the knowledge of the Real in one's own life, otherwise death and disaster is one's lot.[5] It is the knowledge of the One in which everything else becomes known. Without the knowledge of the one nobody can get rid of sorrow. Mere scholarship does not entitle a man to be called wise.[6] Even the Vedas and the

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1. Coomarswamy, A., *The Dance of Siva*, p. 23
2. Devaraj, N. K., *Introduction to Samkara's Theory of Knowledge*, p. 74
3. अपि च सम्यग् ज्ञानान्मोक्ष इति सर्वेषां मोक्षवादिनामभ्युपगमः ।
   Samkara's commentary on the *Brahma Sutra* I. 11
4. अविद्या च सह कार्येण विद्यया हातव्य इति श्रुति स्मृतिन्यायेभ्यः अवगम्यते
   Sankara's commentary on Gita XIII. 3
5. Ken. Up. II. 5
6. Chhānd. Up. 7. 1.

Vedāngas constitute lower knowledge (*aparā vidyā*) through which the imperishable being is not known.[1] It is the metaphysical knowledge, the knowledge of the 'one,' which is knowledge par excellance. Those who attain this 'absolute knowledge' exclaim : no longer now can any one bring before us anything which we have not already heard, understood or known.[2] The unknown is only as it were unknown, only as it were a duality.[3]

Knowledge is freedom, ignorance is bondage. There is no way to salvation except through knowledge.[4] The vision of the senses is liable to be destroyed by disease etc., but the vision of the *ātman*, the self, alone is eternal. Knowledge is the essential nature of the self : the self is knowledge itself. Liberation is nothing but the knowledge of the self. *Saṁsāra* results from an incorrect knowledge of the self[5] It is, therefore, the main task of philosophy to analyse the true nature of the self. Knowledge of the true nature of the self alone constitutes liberation ; lack of it constitutes bondage.[6]

Obviously this 'absolute knowledge' cannot be gained by all. The gates of knowledge are not open to all. Although there are no rigid external qualifications for attainment of knowledge, such as birth, age, sex, social status, yet an intense desire for knowledge (*jijñāsā*) is a primary necessity. Plato holds that without the spirit of dedication, steadfastness, loyality and sincerity, philosophy would become mere cleverness. Only when one is able to withdraw attention from the external objects can one listen to the voice from 'inside.' Introversion or self-withdrawal is, thus, an essential

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1. Mund, Up. 1. 2. 7-11
2. Chhānd. Up. 4. 6. 4.
3. Bṛh. Up. 2. 4. 14
4. Svet. Up. III. 8
5. अस्यैव सम्यक् स्वरुपज्ञानात् यतो मुक्तिः, असम्यक् तु संसार : ... ।
Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam, Trans. by Sri Jaideva Singh, Motilal Banarasidas, p. 51
6. एतत्तत्वपरिज्ञानमेव मुक्तिः, एतत्तत्वापरिज्ञानमेव च बन्धः ... । Ibid p. 46

qualification for seeking knowledge. The individual, due to the very fact that he has an embodied nature, is bound to be extrovert and look outside. It is only when a man of exceptional wisdom, one in millions, turns his gaze from the external and peeps into the depths of his inner being that knowledge is attained. The creature looks outside because the Creator has pierced the openings of the senses outward. Some wise man, alone, wishing to taste immortality beholds the immanent self with reverted eyes (i.e. introspectively).[1]

Metaphysical awareness presupposes a descent of transcendental consciousness. Reason, which is characterized by the chasm between subject and object, operates always in relative isolation and conflict. The gulf remains unbridged in finite knowledge. The awareness of the 'conflict,' the desire to transcend it, and the introversion of the ego, are possible because of the revelatory consciousness. It provides ecstatic, mystic or intuitive experience of the ground of all existence. In accordance with the nature of their tradition and revelation different metaphysical and religious approaches conceive differently the nature and aim of the 'urge for transcendence' At this point the task and scope of Metaphysics and Religion become identical. Both aim at final release or absolute freedom. Though there are differences between them, philosophy and religion meet as far as value is concerned The philosopher of necessity has to operate from an ultimate concern and the theologian must assume the structure of rationality.[2]

In the spiritual approaches there is greater emphasis upon distinguishing the self from the not-self. The original sin consists in mistaking the not-self for the self. It is the basic illusion, the primary source of bondage and suffering ; all sins and suffering are the after effects of this.[3] Subtle changes arise in the human personality from the habit of

1. Katha Up. II. 1., Quoted in PH. p, 85
2. Paul Tillich, *Courage to be*, The Master Pieces of World's Philosophy.
3. *Paramārthasāra*, Kārikā 40

taking the self to be the not-self. These engender new habits in man. This round of habits breeding habits is a part of Saṁsāra, the wheel of rebirth, which is governed by Karma, the habits themselves.[1] However, when the self and the not-self are truly and clearly discriminated, the wheel of Karma, the round of worldly habits or the mechanism of empirical existence, not only stops moving forward but starts moving back towards the realization of the true self. Final release is possible only when the true self is attained. Advances in science and technology cannot bring us freedom.

The illusion which is the cause of bondage is two-fold. Firstly, it consists in assuming the not-self as the real self (*anātmani ātmābhimāna*), such as 'I am lean,' 'I am fat,' 'I am happy,' 'I am non-entity' and so on. Seeing the not-self in the self is another form of the illusion.[2]

However, the view that illusion consists in mistaking the not-self to be the self and the self to be the not-self may be interpreted differently in different approaches. In the *anātmavāda* approach, for example, illusion is regarded as mistaking the not-self (*anātman*) to be the self (*ātman*). In reality there is no self ; belief in the self is illusory. What is not-self appears as self in the case of illusion. According to the approach of the *ātmavādins*, on the other hand, illusion lies in the fact that there is an unwarranted identification of the self with the not-self. In illusion the real self is confused with the not-self.

Reality view is implicit in our world view. Our attitudes towards the world, the conflict, and the 'given' determine largely the mode of our viewing the Real. The vision and the conception of the goal depend upon the nature and

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1. Karl Potter, *Presuppositions of Indian Philosophy*, p. 11

2. आत्मनि अनात्माभिमानपूर्वोऽनात्मनि आत्माभिमानो भवति ... ।

PS, pp. 66-7, Also pp. 86-7

intensity of the 'conflict.' Our attitude towards the 'Transcendent' or 'beyond' is determined by our attitude towards the 'given.' This can be shown with the help of an illustration from the Upaniṣads. There is a well known passage in the Upaniṣad (Bṛh) in which spiritual progress has been described as a process from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality, from bondage to freedom or from finitude to perfection.[1] The spiritual process, so described, may be interpreted differently in different approaches, depending upon the attitude adopted towards the 'given.' Ultimately all differences in our outlooks originate from the differences in our fundamental standpoints. The differences among several systems concerning the proper path to follow stemmed from their divergent views about the nature of reality.[2]

If there is a predominant consciousness of the 'conflict' and the immediate concern is the resolution of the conflict, one is likely to adopt the path of dissolution, or rejection, of the 'ego.' Here the main urge would be to get rid of 'suffering,' to be released from tension, and to realize the state of non-egoity. There is such an acute awareness of the 'conflict,' the awareness of misery and suffering is so overwhelming, that ultimately 'silence' alone is regarded as the great truth. Accordingly, the state of release, or the highest goal, is to be conceived mainly in negative terms. It can be described as the path of dissolution, the *Nirvāṇa Mārga*. It has been typically represented in the Buddhist tradition.[3] According to this approach, the ultimate state of release cannot be characterised in terms of immortality, luminosity, absoluteness etc. There is no appreciation in this tradition for the optimistic speculative tendencies of the Upaniṣads.

1. Bṛh. Up. I. III. 28
2. Potter, Op. cit. p. 44
3. The *Nyāya* is clearly a different formulation of this approach and is nearer to the *Kaivalya* approach than the *Nirvāṇa*. Though according to the *Nyāya* also release is a state of cessation of suffering etc., it is not really a state of *nirvāṇa*. It is a state of pure self-hood.

There is another approach, however, in which the path is literally taken to be a process from the impure to the pure. The ultimate goal is regarded not merely as the cessation of conflict or suffering but also as absolute or pure Being, Consciousness and Bliss. Release is not only a dissolution of the ego but the realization of the true self as well. It is the path of Pure Being, the *Kaivalya Mārga*. Like the *Nirvāṇa* approach here too there is a complete rejection of the ego (or ego-involvement). But, in contrast with the *Nirvāṇa* standpoint, here there is a vigorous affirmation of the Self. According to it release is the attainment of the highest and the true self. Though, like the *nirvāṇa* approach, here also there is a clear recognition of the illusory or nescientic character of the 'given,' yet the spiritual goal is not conceived as mere 'nothing.' This approach is logically developed in the absolutistic metaphysics of the Vedānta tradition, the Advaita Vedānta. The Vedānta approach is not so negative as the Buddhistic approach. It is true that desires can never be satisfied ; every time a desire is fulfilled, it increases more and more and leaves a still stronger impression. Yet, we cannot attain the ātman, which is ānanda or ecstatic joy, merely by recognising defects in the objects of desire—though we might achieve freedom from attachment by doing so.

From another point of view, both above mentioned approaches might appear to be based upon an artificial separation of the ego and the non-ego, subject and object. The conflict is only avoided, and not solved, in these approaches. The real resolution of the 'conflict' is possible only in case there is harmonious integration of the two. True freedom is neither a state of mere 'nothingness,' nor a state of pure or abstract 'Being.' Devoid of absoluteness or *Pūrṇatva* and freedom or *svātantrya* pure 'Being' also would be as good as 'nothing.' Without the realization of absoluteness and freedom the attainment of release would be a mockery.[1]

1. शक्ति ज्ञानं विना देवि मुक्ति हास्याय कल्पते ।

The highest state of release should not be described, strictly speaking, as an annihilation of the ego ; for it is essentially the state of attainment of absolute egoity, *pūrṇa ahaṁtā* ; it is not merely a dissolution of finitude or limitation but the realization of infinitude and perfection as well. In fact, the finite itself is an expression of the infinite. Release consists in the recognition by the finite that in its essential nature it is infinite. The conflict, tension and sufferings are due to a limitation of vision, wherein the absolute subject appears divided into finite subject and object. The process from bondage to release is a process from limitation to freedom, from finitude to perfection and from individuality to universality—not from the unreal to real, as it is held by the Advaita Vedāntins. Separation or disintegration is the source and mark of finitude and suffering, unity and harmony that of perfection and bliss. The 'given' is not rejected in the end ; only its separateness from the 'beyond' is discarded. The given itself is realized to be the beyond ; the object is recognised to be the subject. It is the path of Perfection or *Pūrṇatva mārga.* The integral Śaiva Absolutism of Kashmir represents a bold and consistent development of this approach. Our effort in the subsequent pages of the present work would be to point out the relationship between the *Kaivalya* and the *Pūrṇatva* approaches as developed in the Advaita Vedānta and Kashmir Śaivism, respectively.

Though there might be many more approaches to the 'conflict,' broadly speaking they might be regarded as alterations or combinations of these three basic approaches. It would be incorrect to regard the differences between various approaches as being merely terminological. Excepting a few points of similarity, the attitudes in these approaches towards the 'given' and the 'beyond' are fundamentally different. Both in the *Nirvāṇa* and the *Kaivalya* approaches the 'given' is regarded, generally, as unreal or insignificant (*tuccha*). In the *nirvāṇa* approach the 'given' is taken to be absolutely devoid of value ; it is of the nature of ignorance or suffering. Accordingly its attitude towards

the 'beyond' is determined by this pessimistic outlook. On the other hand, in the *Kaivalya* approach the 'given' is held as merely distorting or hiding the real nature of the 'beyond.' It is neither real nor unreal and has value only in so far as it leads towards the 'beyond.' In contrast with these two, in the *Pūrṇatva* approach the 'given' is accepted to be neither as valueless nor as illusory or unreal. It is regarded as merely imperfect or incomplete in itself. It is a manifestation of the unlimited as limited That very duality which prior to the rise of knowledge, in the state of ignorance, gives rise to deluding or blinding attachment and limitation, leads to absoluteness or perfection at the rise of knowledge. In fact, during the state of illumination duality appears to be more interesting and pleasing than pure or rigorous non-duality, advaita. When the state of equanimity or *sāmarasya* is attained duality becomes the eternal source of divine bliss.

But, inspite of the fact that there are some fundamental differences between them, these approaches need not be regarded as essentially opposed to, or conflicting with, each other. Not only that. We might even suggest that they represent different aspects of the same spiritual process. These three approaches constitute three successive stages in the path of spiritual progress. The first approach, the *nirvāṇa mārga*, stands for the dissolution of the ego ; it is the first and foremost condition of all spiritual awakening. Its importance has been equally emphasised in the other approaches. While the first approach stops at this stage, there is a further progress towards the Transcendent (beyond) in the other two approaches. Transcending the stage of dissolution of the ego, the *Kaivalya* approach is a venture into the nature of the 'goal,' an attempt to point out the 'that' of the 'beyond.' It confines itself to the task of emphasizing the transcendental purity of the 'that'. Now the third approach, though fully realizing the value of the first two stages, represents a still further attempt to dive into the depths of the 'that.' It is third stage of spiritual progress wherein the 'that' aspect of the 'beyond' is recognized

in terms of the 'what.' It is the stage of realization of the transcendent in positive terms. Thus, the first approach may be characterized as a wholly negative stage of spiritual process, the second as partly negative and partly positive, and the third as positive or integral.

Although these approaches represent different stages or aspects of the spiritual process, yet each may be absolute in itself. While they can be conceived as being implicit in each other, each is unique in itself ; none is secondary or derivative.

The realization of the Absolute or *advaita* may be regarded as the ultimate aim of these approaches. Different lines or modes of inquiry always end in the Absolute.[1] For the 'conflict' is resolved only when the state of advaita is attained. Tension, fear, frustration, sorrow and other evils grow and flourish only within the realm of duality. Diversity gives rise to fear, unity to fearlessness ; one who realizes this unity, for him there is no grief, no delusion. For he recognises everything as one with himself. It is only when a feeling of otherness gains lodgement in us that we come to entertain the emotion of fear. The primeaval ātman feared as he was alone, but on finding out that there was no other person he should fear, he became fearless ; for it is only from the idea or existence of a second that fear proceeds.[2] The whole Absolutist epistemology and moral philosophy can be summed up in two propositions : Firstly the urge to consistency and expansion, and secondly, that both are connected, for consistency is only attainable by such an expansion. Mental health and freedom from inner conflict are attained through expansion to wholeness.[3]

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1. W. E. Hocking compares a number of lines of inquiry which end in an absolute. See his '*The Meaning of God in Human Experience*,' p. 195

2. Bṛh, I. 42

3. Cleobury, F. H., *God, Man and Absolute*, Hutchinson & Co., p. 85-6

The Absolute represents the highest value. Ultimate value and existence coincide in the Absolute. Religious consciousness requires that the Supreme existence should also be supreme value. The Absolute is the ground of all beings, all facts and values. Mankind's need for the Absolute is so important that it can be traced in all cultures and ages. From the beginning of religious thought there has been present to the mind of man a Being who is present alike in good and evil. In quite ancient times we may find a wholly explicit definition of such a being as the desire of all mankind. We could not live without the Absolute, nor without our idea of the Absolute. For, the Absolute alone is ultimately satisfying truth.[1] No optimism would be possible without somekind of absolutism. For one can be an optimist only if one has caught or achieved the glimpse of the whole. Further, optimism requires the identification of the Real with the good.[2]

According to Schelling philosophy is the science of the Absolute. Advaitism is the goal of all spiritual disciplines. Absolute freedom is incompatible with duality or plurality of selves. Systems which do not conceive the highest state of release in absolutistic terms have of necessity to relegate plurality to insignificant existence. Ultimately they have to attribute a non-functioning and non-manifest reality to it. Prof. Radhakrishnan says : 'It is my opinion that systems which play the game of philosophy squarely and fairly, with freedom from presuppositions and religious neutrality naturally end in Absolute Idealism ; and if they lead to other conclusion, we may always suspect that the game has not been played according to the rules.[3]

The absolute resolution of the 'conflict' takes place at the dissolution of the ego. But the dissolution has been interpreted differently in different approaches. The spirit of renunciation is supposed to be one of the important means

1. Hocking, Op. cit. pp. 205-6
2. Ibid, pp. 167-8
3. S. Radhakrishnan, Preface to *'Reign of Religion in Contemporary Society'*.

of attaining the state of dissolution of the ego. The individual attains immortality only when the desires of the heart are destroyed.[1] In the *nirvāṇa* approach there is an exclusive emphasis upon the transcendence of desires. On the other hand, there is a greater emphasis upon the realization of the true self in the other two approaches.

In the final analysis, the differences between these approaches appear to be based upon temperamental differences. The votaries of one path need not be satisfied with the methods and results of the other paths. What appears to be really pleasant or desirable (*Preya* or *Śreya*) to one individual need not appear so to the others.[2] The attitude towards the 'given' and the 'beyond' in a particular approach is determined mostly by the fact as to which of the three aspects of experience, cognition, conation and affection, play a dominant role in the formulation of that approach. The first two approaches may be described as cognitive. The cognitive element plays a very significant role in the development of both the *Nirvāṇa* and *Kaivalya* approaches. The valuation of the 'given,' the urge to transcend the 'given,' and the vision of the 'beyond' in these approaches are determined mainly through knowledge. Accordingly, the path followed in these approaches might be called the path of knowledge. On the other hand, will or conative aspect of experience has been taken to be more fundamental in the *Pūrṇatva* approach. The 'will' to transcend finite limitations and to achieve perfection occupies a vital place in the formulation of this approach. But, inspite of the fact that it is conation oriented, the affective or emotional elements are not made insignificant in this approach.[3] In fact, as each approach is complete in itself,

1. Kath. Up. II. 3. 14
2. 'The shoe that fits one person pinches an other ; there is no recipe for living that suits all cases. Each of us carries his own life form—an indeterminable form that cannot be superceded by another.' Jung, C.G., '*Modern Men in Search of a Soul*,' p. 69
3. However, it is mainly in the devotional cults, especially in the Vaiṣṇava tradition as illustrated in Caitanya and Meerā, that the affective element plays the dominant role.

no approach excludes the other elements of experience. It is mainly due to an emphasis upon some particular element in experience that the differences in the approaches arise. Otherwise, satisfactory explanation of entire experience can be provided through every approach. Will and feeling can well be accommodated in the cognitive approach. Similarly, knowledge also can find place in the non-cognitive approaches. In reality none of the elements is prior to the other. In itself experience is dynamic and integral ; all the three elements are simultaneously and equally present in it. It is only from a particular approach or standpoint that emphasis can be laid upon one of the elements. Thus, the main reason why philosophers differ about the respective merits and weaknesses of a given path is their recognition that each one of the classical paths differs from the rest in the manner of emphasis.[1]

2. The two approaches

The present work is an attempt at elaborating some of the important aspects of the *Pūrṇatva* approach, as it is developed in Kashmir Śaivism. Simultaneously, it would be our aim to draw a clear distinction between this and the *Kaivalya* approach, as represented in the Advaita Vedānta. These two approaches claim to be the direct successors of the '*Āgamic*' and '*Vedic*' traditions respectively. Both of them represent the absolutistic development of their traditions. They have the same points of agreement and disagreement between them as those which can be found between the two cultural traditions. Every system of culture has its own line of approach to reality.[2]

It is not possible to draw any final conclusion regarding the teachings of the *āgamas* as only a few of them are available so far. We can, however, form some general idea on the basis of the study of systems which claim to have been based upon the *āgamas*. We shall confine ourselves

1. Potter, Op. cit. p. 43
2. Kaviraj, Gopinath, *History of Philosophy* ; *East and West*. Vol. I, p. 401

to a summary statement of some of the most fundamental differences between the two approaches, without entering into the problem of their historical origin.

The two approaches might be described as the two paths: the left path and the right path (*vāma* and *dakṣiṇa*), the path of happiness and the path of knowledge (*ānanda* and *jñāna*) Left path is the path to utilize all the human potencies, faculties etc. and maintain the state of bliss and thus to release oneself, The right path, on the other hand, is to use these potencies and live discriminatively in order to attain release. The Vedānta approach regards knowledge as more fundamental ; knowledge is sui generis for it. Will and feeling presuppose knowledge. These elements depend upon knowledge for their very existence. But knowledge need not depend upon them. Against this, will is accepted as more fundamental than knowledge in the āgamic tradition. Knowledge is generated by will, as is observed in our daily life.

The concept of freedom or perfection is fundamental to the āgamic approach. Although freedom and perfection have been attributed to Brahman in the Vedānta tradition also, yet the Vedānta approach is more or less negative. Perfection or *Pūrṇatva* essentially means the purity of Being in the Vedānt.[1] Perfection of Brahman denotes its freedom from all becoming. To the followers of the āgamas the exclusive separation between Spirit and World by the Vedāntin does not appear to be consistent with the notion of Perfection, which consists essentially in Omniscience, Omnipotence, Omnipresence, etc. That is why the Vedānta absolutism could not become all-inclusive. As there is hesitation in regarding *māyā* as real, the Vedānta advaitism is exclusive and is based upon renunciation or elimination —it could not be all embracing.[2] Generally speaking, there are two ways in which the term 'freedom' might be

1. Unless specified otherwise, the term Vedānta in the present work stands for the Advaita Vedānta.
2. Kaviraj, Gopinath, *Intr. to Pratyabijña Philosophy*, Alakā, p. 12.

used ; it might be referred to as 'freedom from' if used in a negative sense, and as 'freedom to' when used in a positive sense. 'Freedom to' is a positive description of the capacity of something to bring about the occurrence or non-occurrence of certain events. On the other hand, 'freedom from' denotes the purity or transcendence of a thing from the others. Absolute freedom can be explained as the stage where one is 'free to' and 'free from' with respect to every occurrence or non-occurrence.[1]

There are certain fundamental differences between the two approaches. *Firstly*, the Vedānta tradition seems to be based upon an exclusive or absolute separation of the Real and the Unreal. The distinction between the Real and the illusory is the very presupposition of spiritual awakening. Illusion is the datum for philosophy according to the Vedānta.[2] The experience of illusion provides the criterion of the Real as non-cancellable (*abādhya*) and the illusory as cancellable (*bādhya*). It is significant to note in this context that Samkara not only begins his commentary of the '*Brahma Sutra*' with an analysis of illusion but also insists upon certain essential requirements for spiritual realization. The first and foremost essential qualification of seeker after Truth (*jijñāsu*) is to have the sense of discrimination between the real and the unreal, the eternal and the false (*nitya anitya viveka*).[3] The emphasis upon this qualification brings out clearly the difference of the Vedānta with the non-eternalists (i.e. the Buddhists), on the one hand, and the Tāntric integralists (Śaivites), on the other. While nothing is eternal or permanent for the Buddhists, everything is real for the Tāntric integralists, even the unreal is real for them. The Śaivite who has attained liberation in life sees the entire World as his own Self. He develops an

1. Potter, Op. Cit., p. 48.
2. Murti, T. R. V,, *Two definitions of Brahman in the Advaita,'* p. 142.
3. From the first qualification follow the other three qualifications in succeeding order—the sense of discrimination produces detachment (*Vairāgya*) which is followed by the possession of equanimity and the desire for freedom.

X-ray vision in which the phenomenal events appear to be mere sport of his own conscious energy (*Cit. Śakti*). Doubts do not trouble him any more ; for he realizes the identity between the 'internal' and the 'external.' Both internal and external are aspects of one and the same process. The realization of this identity is itself regarded as the attainment of the highest bliss, the unity or *sāmarasya* of Śiva and Śakti. Thus, Abhinavagupta repeatedly asserts that nothing is unreal in the Śaiva approach. In the world whatever enters into consciousness is a manifestation of the Self. And the reality of whatever enters into consciousness cannot be denied. The objects shine, they do not cease to be by a mere emphatic denial.[1] As opposed to this, one does not deserve to be taught about Brahman, in the Vedānta approach, unless one possesses the powers of discrimination etc. To understand the real import of the Vedānta, one must have the consciousness of the illusoriness of the world. If this consciousness of the illusoriness of the world be not in him, the meaning of teachings about Brahman would not be clear to the student of Vedānta.

Secondly, the Vedānta tradition presupposes opposition between knowledge and ignorance.[2] According to it knowledge and ignorance are opposed to each other like light and darkness. The concept of *avidyā* or ignorance is of fundamental importance for the spiritual discipline prescribed in the Vedānta. If something like avidyā, which is negated at the down of right knowledge, be not admitted, there would be no possibility of freedom. Final release is possible only if the bondage of the soul is due to nescience. For, if the soul is really and truly bound, its real bondage cannot be done away with and, consequently, the Scriptural

1. *Iśvara Pratyabhijñā Vimarśinī*, I. I. Intr.

2. 'The distinction between knowledge and ignorance begins with the hymns of Ṛgveda..... but it is not absolute. But when we come to the Advaita Vedānta, we find a total separation between the principle of knowledge and ignoranee.' Misra, R. S., *Integral Advaitism of Sri Aurobindo*, pp. 200-1.

doctrine of final release would become absurd.[1] Infact, truth and falsity are qualitatively different and absolutely opposed to each other. The transition from error to truth is like transition from darkness to light.[2] Knowledge and ignorance cannot exist simultaneously ; with the dawn of knowledge ignorance disappears altogether.

In the Śaiva tradition, on the other hand, knowledge and ignorance are not accepted as absolutely separate. According to the Śaivite knowledge is ignorance self-revealed and ignorance is knowledges self-concealed. Since the supreme self is of the nature of pure consciousness, what differentiates it from matter is its self-awareness which consists in freedom through which ignorance is manifest, and through ignorance is manifest the world. Ignorance is, thus, a manifestation of divine freedom itself.[3] In the words of Sri Aurobindo, "The principle of ignorance lies midway between the supreme consciousness and the total inconscience. But ignorance and inconscience are the exclusive and separative movements of the same Conscious Force which assumes these apparently opposite and contradictory forms in order to proceed with the work of creation."[4] Ignorance is a manifestation of the power of freedom of Self. It is the light which gives rise to darkness through self-friction.[5] Ignorance is nothing but a self-limitation or self-concentration of consciousness or knowledge.

Thirdly, in the sphere of '*sādhanā*' or spiritual discipline also there is a great difference in the outlook of the two approaches. The distinction between the pure and the impure and emphasis upon the pure (means) constitute a conspicuous feature of the Vedānta tradition. Througout the Vedas and the Vedānta there is present a highly

1. S. B. II. II. 29.
2. Malakani, G. R., *Vedāntic Epistemology*, p. 15 (115 ?)
3. Kaviraj, Gopinath, *History of Philosophy : East and West*, vol. I, p. 424.
4. *Life Divine*.
5. Kaviraj, Gopinath, '*Bharatiya Samskriti aur Sādhanā*,' p. 4.

contemptuous attitude towards the impure. On the other hand, there is not only a lack of enthusiasm to draw any distinction between the pure and impure in the *āgamic* tradition, but there are positive suggestions and directions not to distinguish the two. The devotee is repeatedly asked to develop the attitude to regard everything as pure.[1] Self-realization is possible only if the '*sādhaka*' is able to accept everything, including the impure, as a real manifestation of the divinity. The follower of the Tantra goes directly through the sphere of greatest danger. By breaking within himself the tension of the 'forbidden', the Tantric resolves every thing in light.[2] The uniqueness of the Tantric tradition lies in the fact that while the followers of other traditions, especially the followers of the Vedānta, try to attain release by avoiding what they regard as evil or impure, the Tantric gains release through enjoyment or realization of the so-called 'evil' or impurity.[3]

This gives rise to another point of difference between the two traditions. *Bhoga* and *Yoga*, sensous joy and union with the Divine, are taken to be identical in the Tantric approach. On this point the Tantric discipline differs radically from other spiritual disciplines. *yoga* and *bhoga* are the same according to Tantricism. Through proper discipline *bhoga* itself can be transformed into a way of *yoga*. Tantricism, thus, represents a stupendous Dionysian affirmation in Indian culture. It is an erotic life philosophy, precisely

1. 'Tantrism, as a matter of course, insists on the holiness and purity of all things.' Zlmmer, H., '*Philosophies of India*,' p. 572.
2. Ibid, p. 573.
3. पुण्यपापादि हेतुभूते नीलसुखादौ एव ययोपायतां तद्विषय प्रमान्वेषणद्वारेण जनः प्रत्यभिजानाति, यः पाप पुण्य हेतुत्वेन मम पूर्व प्रसिद्धः नीलसुखादि भावः स एव मोक्षसाधनमिति । ···येनैव मुह्यति जडः प्राज्ञस्तरति तेनैव संसारात्'

"The objective world which is at first the cause of sin and merit etc., the root cause of transmigration. By this Śāstra the same is made to be recognised as the sure means to spiritual path," IPV. I. I. 1, Bhaskari, Vol. I, pp. 40-1.

the opposite and exactly complement of sterilyzing, stern, sublime, ascetic thinking of the *kaivalya* tradition.[1]

In conformity with these differences there is further difference in the two approaches as regards the admissibility of an individual for initiation. While the Vedānta tradition is open only to the upper castes, the *dvijas* or twice-born, the Tantric insists upon eligibility of all persons, castes, and sexes for spiritual realization.[2] Unlike the Vedic systems, there are no restrictions of birth etc. in the Śaiva schools.

Precise knowledge of the origin and mutual relationship between the two traditions lies burried in the depths of antiquity. It is now generally recognized that the origin of these traditions is much older than was formerly supposed. Śiva and Śakti worship has been traced to the Mohanjodaro and Harappan age.[3] Efforts have also been made to trace Śaiva worship in the Vedas ('*Śiśnadevah,*'

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1. *Philosophies of India*. p. 600.
2. यस्य कस्यचिज्जन्तोरिति नात्र जात्याद्यपेक्षा काचित्···:
   IPV. IV. 1. 18.
   The Tantra doctrine and its expresslon in ritual are for all, what ever be their race. caste or sex. This marks a great advance on the parochial restriction of Vedas. The Tantras inculcate the veneration of woman and favour both sexes equally, It is regarded as a crime to illtreat women, who are Śaktis. A. Avalon, *Principles of Tantra*, p. 11.
   "According to the Tantra, alone of the great Sāstras, a woman may be a spiritual teacher and initiation by her achieves increased benefit.' Ibid. pp. 112-13.
   "The low kula who refuses to initiate a *Candāla* or a *Yavana* into the Kula dharma considering them to be inferior, or a woman, out of disrespect for her, goes the downward way. All two feeted beings in the world, from the Vipra to inferior castes, are competent for Kulacāra." *Kulārṇava Tantra*, XIO, 184, 7.
3. According to H. Zimmer, the antiquity of the concept of Śiva Pasupati and Śiva Nataraj can be traced atleast till Indus Valley Civilization. The former is indicated by a plaque on which is engraved a horned deity, seated like a Yogin, having three faces. The latter is suggested by .the significant torso depicted in Harappa. *Myths and Symbols*, p. 168.

Vāgāmbarisi, etc). It has been suggested that among the ancient gods the Vedic Rudra might be regarded as the original form of Śiva.[1] "Lord-worship can be traced back to the neo-lithic period. Already at Mohanjodaro, the *lingam* occurs. The *lingam* denotes the creative energy of Śiva......combined with the *yoni* (it) serves as a representation of the creative union that procreates and sustains the life of the universe. They symbolise the antagonistic yet cooperative forces of the sexes."[2] It is, however, with a 'sense of forever lost' that we must study the Śaiva tradition.

The term '*tantra*' has been derived from the root *tan*. Accordingly, it means the *śāstra* through which expansion of knowledge takes place.[3] It might also mean that which protects the devotees. In its general usage, it denotes any system, doctrine, theory or school of thought, i.e. *sāstra*. In its specific usage, *āgama*, which is another name for the Tantra, is that system which explains the means of enjoyment as well as of release. Tantra is also used for such works which deal with the nature, attribute and function of the gods, and the Mantras concerning them. By the use of these Mantras in the sacrifices (*yajñas*) concentration on the Gods is attained.

There are two kinds of attitudes towards the Vedas in the Āgamas : attitude of antagonism and attitude of allegiance. Appayadikśita and some other scholars divide the Āgamas into two classes—those which are in agreement with the Vedas and those opposed to the Vedas. Antagonism is clearly noticeable in those Āgamic passages in which the Vedānta has been frequently criticised.[4] On the other hand, there are many passages in the Āgamas which give the impression that the Āgamas might have been derived from the Vedas.[5]

It has been said that *āgama* is meant specially for the present age, i.e. *kaliyuga*. There is a specific form of worship

1. Yadubanshi, '*Saivamata*,' p. 1.
2. Zimmer, H., '*Myths and Symbols*,' p. 126.
3. तन्यते विस्तार्यंते ज्ञानम् अनेन इति तंत्रम्.
4. Sastri, S. S. Suryanarayan, '*The Śivadvaita of Śrikantha*,' pp. 3-11.
5. Ibid. p. 4,

in each part or age (yuga) of the great circle of time. The Vedic mode of worship has been prescribed in the first age, viz. *Satayuga*, *smṛti* in the second age, viz. *Tretā yuga*, Purāṇa in the third age, viz. *Dvāpara*, and Tantra in the *Kaliyūga*.[1] In the present age there is no hope for mankind without following the path shown by the *āgamas*.[2] The Tantras were taught by Śiva to Pārvati in order to redeem those persons who are unable to distinguish between good and evil. There is a greater emphasis upon knowledge in the Vedas than in the *āgamas*, which lay more emphasis upon action. Accordingly, the knowledge path of the Vedas is 'open.' On the other hand, there are esoteric tendencies in the Āgamic path.

It is held that though the Āgamas were originally based upon the Vedas, they have developed independently of the latter. They have branched out from the same stem of the Vedic tree which produced the earlier Upaniṣads.[3] The Āgamas are supposed to constitute truest exigesis of the Vedas and their origin are certainly as ancient as some of the classical Upaniṣads.[4] Further, it is said that both the Vedas and the Āgamas belong to the same Hindu culture and both have the same root. Their differences are confined only to certain points : While the Vedas have been issued forth from four, out of five, mouths of Śiva, the Tantras of the higher tradition issued forth from his central or fifth mouth.[5] Again, the Śāstras have been classified into Śruti, Smṛti, Purāṇa, and Tantra. The last three assume the first as their base and are infact merely special presentment of it for their respective ages. The relation of the Vedas and Āgamas is sometimes compared with that of *jivātman* and

1. See *Kulārṇava Tantra*.
2. विना ह्यागम मार्गेण कलौ नास्ति गतिः प्रिये ।
   Mahā Nirvāṇa Tantra.
3. Dr. V. V. Raman Sastri in his introduction to J. M. Nallaswami Pillai's '*Studies in Śaiva Siddhāntā*', A. Avalon, *Principles of the Tantra*, p. 50.
4. Avalon, A., *Principles of Tantra*, p. 51.
5. Ibid,

Paramātman ; the Tantra is said to represent the inner core of the former.[1] The main purport of the Āgamas is to represent the Vedānta correctly. They deal with subjects which are not dealt in the Vedas. While the Vedas represent the 'quest', the Āgamas stand for the 'attainment.' The Āgamas also deal with the fifth state, viz. *turīyātīta*, in addition to the four states of experience, viz. waking, dreaming, deep sleep and the fourth

Saint Tirumular holds that the Vedas and Āgamas both are true, as both are divine revelations. The only difference between them is that while the Vedas are general the Āgamas are special. According to Śrikantha though both of them are of equal authority, the Vedas are to be studied only by the members of the upper castes. The Āgamas, on the other hand, are open for study by all castes.[2]

The other view may be that both Vedas and Āgamas have entirely different roots and traditions and have nothing in common between them. The Āgamas represent the essence of the Dravidian or non-Āryan culture and the Vedas, on the other hand, originate from and represent the *āryan* culture. However, this view is based upon the much-disputed theory of different races. The theory involves many unsound assumptions.

In the absence of any definite historical data it would be safer to regard both Vedas and Āgamas as belonging to the same Indian roots. Both currents of thought appear to have been running parallel to each other since ancient days. Although sometimes they appear to be antagonistic to each other, on the whole there prevails the spirit of harmony and regard between them.

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1. Ibid.
2. वयं तु वेद शिवागमयोर्भेद न पश्याम: वेदोऽपि शिवागम: इति व्यवहारो युक्त:, तस्य तत्कर्तृत्वात् : अत: शिवागमो द्विविध: त्रैवर्णिक वेदागमौ । Śrikantha's *Commentary on the Brahma Sutras* II. II. 38.

CHAPTER TWO

ADVAITISM IN THE VEDANTA

1. Advaitism in Indian Philosophy

Advaitism flourished in Indian Philosophy long before Śaṁkara attempted a systematic interpretation of the Vedānta tradition on *advaitic* lines. Since ancient times advaitism appears to be a very favourite concept of the Indians. Elements of advaitism can certainly be traced in the *Saṁhitās*. It was popular both in the Upaniṣads as well as in the epics. Different forms of absolutism were prevailing during quite early days.[1] G. H. Howison argues that absolutism is an Oriental theory. According to him Occidental man has an instinctive preference for personal initiative, responsibility and credit which no monistic philosophy can ever satisfy. It has to be admitted that Indian thinkers, old and new alike, have been particularly attracted by absolute idealism. Even now it is the Indians who are keeping Bradley's name alive at a time when he has few disciples in the Western world.[2] In the words of Romain Rolland, "The heart and essence of the Indian experience is to be found in a constant intuition of the unity of all life, and the instinctive and the ineredicable conviction that the recognition of this unity is the highest good and the uttermost freedom. All that India can offer to the world proceeds from her philosophy."[3]

Though all the advaitic schools of thought universally admit that reality is ultimately non-dual in character, there

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1. See Kaviraj, Gopinath, *Introduction to Brahma Sutra with Śaṁkar's Commentary*, Achyuta, Banaras ; Also Upadhyaya, Baldeva, *Sri Śaṁkaracārya*, pp. 328-9.

2. *Hundred Years of Philosophy*, p. 74.

3. Romain Rolland, Foreword with introductory preface in '*Dance of Siva*,' by Coomarswamy.

are some fundamental differences between them as regards the conception of the non-dual reality. Every system in Indian philosophy belongs to a particular tradition of thought and culture. Each system has its unique line of approach towards ultimate reality. It would be quite erroneous to overlook these basic differences in the different forms of absolutism. It has to be admitted that in each tradition absolutism came to be established by its inner dynamism It was the necessity to be self-consistent which impelled them to move in this direction.[1]

2. Advaitism in the Upanisads

The Upaniṣads have been called the Vedānta as most of them constitute the concluding part of the Vedas, and also because their teachings represent the aim or goal of the Vedas. They are connected to the *samhitās* through the *Brāhmanas* and the *āranyakas*. Owing to their different traditions the followers of various *Samhitās* developed their own separate lines of approach towards Reality. Later on every school of Vedānta claimed to follow the true spirit of the Upaniṣads. Owing to the richness and fertility of their thought the majority of systems of Indian Philosophy try to be inconformity with the Upaniṣads. This is precisely the main difficulty in the study of the Upaniṣads. Though they contain the germs of many systems, in themselves the Upaniṣads lack consistency or system. Because their teachings are not confined to any particular system, differences arise within the Vedānta tradition itself. Ramanuja, and Śamkara, the champions of qualified monism (viśiṣṭādvaita) and absolutism (advaitism) respectively, have attempted interpretation of the Upaniṣads in their own ways. Śamkara holds that the real teachings of the Upanisads is *advaitic*.

The Advaita Vedāntins hold that 'though all the Brahmanical systems are derived from the Upaniṣads, there is justification to hold that only the Advaita Vedānta repre-

1. Murti, T. R. V., *Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, Allen and Unwin, p. 13.

sents the real heart of the Upanisads.'[1] On the other hand, according to Ramanuja the essence of the teachings of the Upaniṣads is qualified monism.

However, with due respect to the two great *acāryas* or teachers and the learned scholars who attempt to interprete the Upaniṣads in their own way, we may say that the thought of the Upaniṣads cannot be confined to any particular system. Though advaitism might be regarded to be the central thought of the Upanisads, this advaitism can not be given any particular level. Advaitism of the Upaniṣads is the fertile ground containing seeds of different types of absolutism. The main contribution of Upaniṣads to advaitism lies in the fact that they carried the original Vedic tendencies towards advaitism to an advanced stage of speculation. They provided the ground, seeds, climate and necessary equipment for the development of absolutism in Indian Philosophy.

There is a great emphasis upon knowledge in the Upaniṣads. Knowledge about perishable objects is regarded as lower ; only the knowledge which relates to the Highest, the Imperishable, is regarded as higher.[1] The higher is that knowledge whereby the unheard becomes the heard of, the unthought becomes the thought of, the unknown becomes the known.[2] The higher knowledge alone is entitled to be called knowledge (vidyā) ; the lower knowledge is merely ignorance. Throughout the Upaniṣads we find a vigorous search for knowledge.[3] It is the 'search' for the knowledge of the 'One', by knowing which everything else becomes known. Knowledge is imperishable, ignorance is perishable.[4]

Establishment of the identity between *atman* and *brahman*, the highest self of the individual and the ultimate reality of the universe, in the Upaniṣads is one of the greatest achievements in the realm of thought. Right from the Mantras

1. *Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, p. 55.
1. Mund. Up. I. I. 4-5.
2. Chhānd. Up. VI. I. 3.
3. Kaṭha Up. II. 4.
4. Svet. Up. V. 1

and Brahmanas there was a tendency to seek for a correspondence between the individual and the world. In the *Puruṣa Sukta*, for example, the parts of the universe have been described in terms of the parts of a man's body etc. Further, in the funeral hymns (Rg. X. 16) also we find the same tendency of conceiving the universe as an individuality. The most definite expression for the first principle of the universe or Brahman was found in the conception of the Ātman. The Ātman is the Indian expression for the first principle and defines in a clear and striking manner the one eternal problem of all philosophical research.[1] The absoluteness of Self has been emphasised in a dialogue between Prajapati and Indra.[2] The senses, the body, the mental states and the stream of consciousness are mere instruments or objects of the Self. The Self is essentially the subject, the knower or illuminator of all experience, and transcends all objectivity. The Self cannot be known as an object ; for the knower cannot be the known.[3] Not being able to grasp it, thought and speech turn back.[4] It is other than the known but above the unknown.[5] Whatever shines shines through its light alone. Knowledge of the Ātman is highest wisdom *(parā vidyā* or *ātma vidyā)*.[6] The identification of the Subject and the Object is of great significance. An object in itself is a mere hypothetical entity unless it is given in self-experience. When the same is identified with the Self, it becomes the necessary presupposition of all experience. The unity of the Self has been demonstrated through an analysis of the different states of experience such as waking, dreaming etc. The analysis of deep sleep is very important in this context. The state of deep sleep, in which there is no distinction of subject and object, supplies existential evidence of the non-dual Ātman. It has been said that in

1. Paul Deussen, *Philosophy of the Upaniṣads*, pp. 25-86.
2, Chhānd. VIII. 3-12.
3. Bṛh. II. IV. 12-14.
4. Tait. II. 4.
5. Ken. I. 3.
6. Ibid. II. 7.

deep sleep the individual is carried every day to Brahman. 'When a man is asleep then he becomes united with True, he is gone to his own (self). Therefore they say *svapiti*, he sleeps because he has gone (apita) to his own (sva).'[1] But, even though the Self is One with Brahman in deep sleep, it does not know that it is 'one'. 'As people, who do not know a field, walk again and again over a golden treasure that is hidden somewhere on earth, and yet are not able to discover it, thus do all these creatures day after day become merged in Brahman, and yet do not discover it because they are carried away by untruth.'[2]

Brahman or Ātman has been described in two different ways in the Upaniṣads. Often it has been recognized to be an all inclusive first principle which is the ground and source of the universe. On the other hand, there are passages in which Brahman is regarded to be the sole reality and the universe as a mere appearance, a mere name and form without substantiality. Because of this dual mode of approach there arise different schools in the Vedānta tradition. This two-fold description of Brahman is very frequent in the Upaniṣads. While teaching his son Bhṛgu about the nature of Brahman, Varuṇa begins with the *taṭastha lakśaṇa* or accidental characteristics of Brahman: That verily from which all these beings are born ; by which when born, they live and into which they pass at death—that is Brahman. Bhṛgu is then successively told about the various inadequate conceptions of ultimate reality, like matter, prāṇa, etc Finally, the *svarupa laksaṇa* or essential nature of Brahman is described. It refers to the very essence of reality, viz. *ānanda*. From bliss all these beings are born, in bliss they sustain, to bliss they return.[3] The followers of Ramanuja hold both the characteristics of Brahman to be real. The Advaita Vedāntins, on the other hand, regard

1. Chhānd. VI. 8. 1.
2. Ibid. VIII. 3. 2.
3. Taitt. III. Bhṛguvalli.

the defining characteristics in both the cases to be Kalpita or fancied.'[1]

There are various passages in the Upaniṣads which support the cosmic view, and declare that the world is a real manifestation of Brahman. It has been repeatedly asserted that the Self is indeed the whole world.[2] As all spokes are contained in the axle and the wheel, so all beings, all Gods, all worlds, all organs are contained in the universal self or Brahman.[3] The creation of the world out of Brahman has been compared to the ejection of the thread from a spider, to the scattering of sparks from fire, to the sprouting of herbs from earth, to the growth of hair on the head and the body of a living person.[4]

On the other hand, there are passages in which cosmic tendencies are clearly present. Later on these very tendencies were systematised into Vedānta advaitism at the hands of Gauḍpada and Śaṁkara. Denying the reality of plurality, the Upaniṣads proclaim that those who are engrossed in plurality go on revolving in the cycle of birth and death. Brahman alone is Real ; it is the real of the Real. Splitting the term *satyam* into three syllables, *sa*, *ti*, *yam*, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* says that the first and the third syllable mean truth and the third signifies untruth. Accordingly it means that the entire world, the middle state, is untruth enclosed on both sides by truth. Truth is the source of origin and ultimate end of the middle state, which is untruth.[5] Ātman is the only reality, everything else is a mere word, a mode or name.[6]

Whether the doctrine of māyā is taught in the Upaniṣads is not very clear. But undoubtedly there are passages which

1. Hiriyana, *Indian Philosophical Studies,* Vot. I.
2. Chhānd. VII. XII. 2.
3. Bṛh. II. III. 15.
4. Bṛh. II. I. 20 ; Mund. I. I. 7 ; Īsa 7 ; Taitt. II. 6.
5. Bṛh.
6. Chhānd. TI. 1. 4.

contain the seeds of the concept of māyā. It is said in the Īśa Upaniṣads that the veil that covers the truth is golden ; it is so gaudy and dazzling that it takes away the mind of the observer from the inner contents.[1] Ignorance has been described as Knot which has to be untied before the realization of the Self takes place.[2] It is strange how people live in ignorance and thinking themselves wise move about wandering like blind following the blind.[3] It is held that Indra assumes many forms by his māyā.[4] According to the *Svetāsvetara*, God, the Māyin, creates the world through māyā.[5]

But there are some passages which create the impression that the Advaita Vedānta doctrine of māyā is foreign to the Upaniṣads. That is why 'even the followers of Śaṁkara were themselves sceptical as to the presence of Māyāvāda in the Upaniṣads and believed it to be an innovation of their school designed mainly to furnish a rational basis to the Vedānta metaphysics.'[6] Śruti itself is indifferent as regards the question whether bondage is real or unreal. It is we who, in order to make the texts tally with reason, conceive bondage to be of the nature of nescience.[7] There are only a few places in the Upaniṣads where the term Māyā occurs. And in all such places it can be interpreted either as a 'mysterious power' or as a 'moral defect.' Thus, 'It is certain that the Vedānta theory of *adhyāsa* is utter stranger to the Upaniṣadic thinkers......No higher tribute can be paid to the interpretative ingenuity of Śaṁkara that his system

1. Īsa. 15.
2. Mund. II. 1. 10.
3. Kath I. 2, 4-5.
4. इन्द्रो मायाभि: पुरु रुप ईयते ।
   Bṛh. II. V. 19
5. Svet. IV. 9.
6. Devaraj, N. K., *Introduction to Śaṁkara's Theory of Knowledge*, p. 87.
7. अस्माभिस्तु श्रुतोपपत्यर्थं बन्धस्याविद्यात्मात्वं कल्प्यते ।
   Ibid, VPS. p. 8.

should produce the impression of being not only the most reasonable but also the most natural presentation of the Upaniṣadic philosophy.'[1]

However, the very fact that mutually opposed systems owe their allegiance to the Upaniṣads indicates that the seeds of some of the fundamental doctrines of these systems were present in the teachings of the Upaniṣads. Any objective or impartial study would lead to this conclusion. It is evident that all systems of Indian Philosophy, except Charvāka, derived inspiration from the Upaniṣads.

3. The Samkhya Dualism

It is supposed that the Sāṁkhya was the first system to arise in Indian Philosophy. It grew and developed as a synthesis purely on rationalistic basic of the teachings of the Upaniṣads.[2] Like the Vedānta systems the Sāṁkhya is also based primarily upon the Upaniṣads. It aims at producing a homogenious system out of the hetrogenious thoughts of the Upaniṣads.

In this endeavour, the Sāṁkhya became conscious of the contradiction involved in the conception of an immutable pure Self transforming itself in the changing world. To attribute change as well as changelessness to one and the same entity is not logically possible. In order to maintain the purity and identity of the Self, it has to be regarded as absolutely devoid of change. The spiritual character of the Ātman can be preserved only if the material, the changing, does not form a part of its nature. For the spiritual and the material are absolutely exclusive to each other. Accordingly, the Sāṃkhya, separating all becoming or materiality from the *Ātman*, accepted two distinct and eternal entities having neither beginning nor end ; the Ātman was called the *Puruṣa*, the Being eternal (*Kūṭasṭhaniṭya*), which has no connection with the phenomenal world The other

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1. Ibid, p. 89.
2. CPB, pp. 55-64.

Reality is *Prakṛti* or nature which is the source and ground of all change and is accordingly characterised as the Becoming Eternal *(Pariṇāmī nitya)*. Thus, the simple monism of the Upaniṣads gives way to the *Puruṣa-Prakṛti* dualism in the Sāṁkhya. The bliss-oriented lofty idealism of the Upaniṣads is henceforth lost in the wilderness of Being or Becoming. Here creeps in the pessimistic attitude towards life, which later on became the chief characteristic of Indian thought and dominated the Indian Mind for centuries.

While admitting the reality of change, the Sāṁkhya assert that change does not affect the unity and identity of the 'whole.' The realm of change is a unity which is capable of sustaining all differences. In spite of its transformation into the effect, the identity of the cause remains unmodified. However, the emergeuce of the effect from the cause is not absolutely a new production. The existence and nature of the cause can only be inferred from the nature of the effect. For the cause is unmanifest, only the effect is manifest. Now, judging from the effects, the cause cannot be regarded as a simple entity. The cause must have a complex nature, holding within itself the principle of both being and becoming. Accordingly, *Prakṛti*, the world cause, has as its constituents the three *guṇas*, *sat*, *rajas* and *tamas*, which are responsible for rest, movement and inertia, respectively. It is both the cause as well as the effect ; as cause, it is the source and ground of all effects ; as effect, it stands for the entirety of effects emerging from the causes. The relationship that holds between the Prakṛti as cause and Prakṛti as effect is that which holds between cause and caused, independent and dependent, whole and part. The underlying logic might be called the logic of identity tinged with differences.[1]

The later systems of Indian Philosophy were quick to reveal the contradictions inherent in the Sāṁkhya position. It has to face difficulties similar to all dualistic approaches.

1. CPB, p. 62.

The inconsistencies implied in a dualistic standpoint were easily pointed out by the opponents. They also attempted to show contradictions in the Sāṁkhya conceptions of bondage and release. Though the primary aim of this system is the attainment of release through knowledge yet, ineffect, it is through knowledge that the existence of two mutually opposed eternal substances is established. If Prakṛti is ultimate reality, final release from it is not possible. Nor is there any logical ground for holding the view that in the state of release Prakṛti hides itself from the view of the wise like a bashful maiden. Moreover, there is no satisfactory explaination of the phenomenon of bondage in the Sāṁkhya. Spirit and Nature, Puruṣa and Prakṛti, being wholly opposed in nature, it is difficult to understand how can there arise any sense of identity between them. There is no other intermediary object or principle between them which can account for the rise of sense of confusion. Finally, to say that Prakṛti exists and functions for the sake of Puruṣa is to make Prakṛti wholly dependent upon the Puruṣa. This leads the Sāṁkhya to the postulation of plurality of Puruṣas in order to make the 'process' continuous.

The Sāṁkhya itself seems to be conscious of some of these inconsistencies. In order to account for the possibility of change, it is forced to attribute final causality to Puruṣa. This means abandoning, or atleast, compromising the original dualistic standpoint. On the other hand, the Puruṣa also loses its independence and becomes dependent upon Prakṛti for attaining final release.

Thus, a critical assessment of the Sāṁkhya metaphysics convinced the later schools of Philosophy that fundamental dualism was ultimately untenable. It is mainly this realization which is responsible for the growth and development of subsequent Indian thought into two opposite or extreme lines, *ātmavāda* and *anātmavāda*. Ātmavāda tradition originates from an acceptance of the sole reality of the Being Eternal, the Witness Consciousness or Puruṣa. The Becoming Eternal or Prakṛti loses its independence and is

regarded as mere *tuccha* or 'nothing in itself' in the end. This line of approach was adopted by the Vedāntins who upheld the Upaniṣadic concept of the Ātman ; it attained its culmination in the Advaita Vedānta. The other line of approach was developed in the Anātmavāda tradition of Buddhism which accepts the Becoming Eternal to be the sole pattern of reality and denies the reality of permanent spirit, the Being Eternal or Ātman. In either case, the Sāṁkhya dualism finally gave way to non-dualism. In the former tradition dualism was replaced by the non-dualism of Being or Ātman, in the later it was substituted by the non-dualism of Becoming or Anātman.

4. Anatmavada Advaitism

There is no justification for postulating a separate reality transcendent to Prakṛti if our experience is wholly confined to Prakṛti or its evolutes. Accordingly, the Buddhists, accepting the sole reality of Prakṛti, rejected the concept of a transcendental Being (viz. the Puruṣa). Because of their concern for consistency, they refused to accept anything as permanent.

But logic is a double-edged weapon. The logic which was employed by the Sāṁkhya in order to divide the integral monism of the Upaniṣads into the Puruṣa-Prakṛti dualism could also be used, with equal force, against the doctrine of a permanent and unitary principle of change (viz. Prakṛti). Difficulties similar to the doctrine of Ātman in the Upaniṣads arise with regards to the concept of Prakṛti. For, how can Prakṛti simultaneously be changing and unchanging, transcient and eternal ? How can Prakṛti maintain its identity and unity if it is always changing ? That is why the Buddhists, accepting the Sāṁkhya disintegration of the simple monism of the Ātman, adopted the path of absoluteness of Becoming. Although the Sāṁkhya abandoned the notion of 'advaita,' he was careful to retain the concept of Spirit as well as of Nature. But the Buddhist was not interested in the eternal or permanent substance.

He, therefore, discarded the Conception of Spiritual substance and retained only the fleeting series of mental states, from which the development of the void theory is a natural step.[1] Effeciency is the test of reality according to the Buddhists. Hence, the permanent, which is non-efficient, cannot be regarded as real. Reality is pure change or flux, having neither a past nor a future, a point instant (kśaṇika).

Advaitism, previously lost in the dualism of the Sāṁkhya and later on in the 'Flux' of early Buddhism, now reappears with greater vigour in the later Buddhism as *Śūnya* and *Vijñāna* absolutism. In both the cases, firstly in the case of bifurcation of simple monism and secondly in the emergence of Advaitism in later Buddhism, it was the inner urge for consistency which led to these developments.

The Mādhyamika Absolute is the consciousness that all views about reality are unreal. The Absolute is 'Silence.'[2] It was the awareness of the total conflict in Reason which made the development of Śunya Advaitism possible.[3] The dialectical consciousness brought about the realization that the ultimate nature of reality is utterly indeterminable. The untenability of the Sāṁkhya position proved to be the basis for the growth of dialectical consciousness. The Sāṁkhya bipolarity of Being and Becoming led to the doctrine of absoluteness of change. Spirit and Nature both were denied substantial existence, and were reduced to the existence of the moment, a point instant, in Buddhism. This *anātmavāda* tradition gave rise to first absolutistic system in Indian Philosophy. The Mādhyamika Buddhists drew attention to the inconsistencies involved in their own tradition. They boldly asserted that the Buddhist view, that pure change is real, is fallacious. Like Being, Becoming also canot be ultimate. Permanent and transitory, continuous

1. Keith, A. B. *The Sāṁkhya System*, pp. 23-4.
2. परमार्थो हि आर्याणाम् तूष्णीम्भाव एव ।
   MKV, p. 57.
3. CPB, pp. 55-103.

and discrete are relative to each other ; one cannot be conceived without the other. Affirmation or negation of the one cannot be possible without the simultaneous affirmation or negation of the other. Accordingly the Mādhyamika declared that both the substance and the modal views are ultimately untenable. The adherents of the substance view fail to explain the phenomena of change or becoming. Like wise, the adherents of the modal view cannot account for the experience of permanence, continuity and universality. Both of them, because of the logical inconsistencies inherent in their positions, are ultimately compelled to adopt a state of absolute 'silence.' They have to resort to the doctrine of *avidyā* or ignorance.

The Mādhyamika made a significant contribution towards the development of absolutism in Indian thought. It has influenced almost all absolutistic systems in Indian Philosophy. After it the Absolute has been generally recognized as transcending all determinations. But, at the same time, it has been accepted as being immanent in the phenomena as their innermost essence.[1]

The *vijñāna* absolutism in the *Yogācāra* Buddhism represents a constructive approach towards the conception of the Absolute. While the Mādhyamika did the pioneering work in emphasizing the indeterminate nature of the Absolute, the Yogācāra made a further contribution to absolutism by identifying the Indeterminate with pure consciousness (vijñāna). The later absolutistic systems generally follow the Vijñānavādins on this point.

5. Advaita in Buddhism and Vedanta

There is no unanimity among scholars about the exact nature of relationship between Buddhist and Vedānta absolutisms. Some hold that both of these absolutisms belong to a common tradition, viz. Vedānta. While Buddhism is a development upon the Upaniṣads, the Vedānta is essentially a reinterpretation of the same tradition in the light of the

1. Ibid.

achievements and failures of the new development. There is the other view according to which they might be regarded as belonging to two different traditions. However, inspite of this fundamental difference between them, mutual influence cannot be completely ruled out. Buddhism, which itself was inspired by the idealism of the Upaniṣads, has influenced the growth of Vedānta tradition.

It appears that these absolutisms developed independently of each other, in accordance with their own traditions. It is not necessarily impossible for each tradition to develop into Advaita. Nor it is true to say that Vedānta Advaitism would not have been possible without the Buddhist Advaitism. For, if the radical pluralism of earlier Buddhism could lead to the absolutism of the Mādhyamika, a similar development could happen here too, perhaps with greater ease.'[1] Infact, elements of advaitism were already present in the Vedānta tradition. The Upaniṣads contained teachings which emphasised knowledge of the 'One', knowing which everything else becomes known. The fact that Śaṁkara refers to Gauḍpāda as the knower of the tradition suggests that the advaitic thought was already present in the Vedānta tradition.

As regards the question whether entire Indian thought stems from one original root or from different sources, some thinkers accept an unilinear tradition and regard almost all systems to be representations of a single line of thought. Other scholars hold that these various traditions are radically different from each other. But both these views suffer from the 'fallacy of over simplification' and fail to grasp the truth. 'A careful analysis would reveal that Brahmanism and Buddhism belong to the same genius, but differ as species. In a sense they are complementary to each other.'[2]

Obviously there are many similarities between the two traditions. Probably it is due to these similarities that

1. CPB. p. 113.
2. Murti, TRV, *Buddhism and Vedānta.*

Śaṁkara has been described as a crypto Buddhist by some of his critics For, both the Buddhists and the Vedāntins emphasise the transcendence of the Absolute ; both accept the theory of *avidyā* and of the levels of truth But it would be unfair to hold that Śaṁkara borrowed his absolutistic ideas from others,[1] or that he was indebted to the Buddhists for his central concepts. Advaitism was already present in the teachings of the Upaniṣads. Even the distinction of empirical and absolute (*Vyāvahārika* and *Pāramārthika*) knowledge may be regarded as a development of the *Parāparā* division of knowledge in the Upaniṣads. The doctrine of illusory causation (*Vivartavāda*) also appears to be a logical presentation of the Upaniṣadic view that the effects differ from the cause only in respects of name and form, which are unreal.[2]

Moreover, if Śaṁkara was really indebted to the Buddhists, the Buddhists themselves would not have failed to make use of this fact. Infact, they should have been the first to point out this. But nowhere in the Buddhist tradition do we find any suggestion to this effect. In reality there could have been no borrowing of doctrines or concepts from others. Unlike the Buddhists, the Vedāntin adopts the Ātman approach and accepts the authority of the Vedas. It is a God centred approach, as apposed to the 'man centred' approach of Buddhism. Revelation, as contained in the Vedas, is the main source of inspiration in the Vedānta; in Buddhism it is chiefly reason and practical in sight which illumine the path.

However, inspite of the fact that the two advaitisms originate from two different and independent traditions, Buddhism played a significant role in the emergence and development of Vedānta advaitism. There is a tremendous influence of Buddhistic advaitism upon entire Indian thought. But generally this was confined mainly to the sphere

1. Kaviraj, G., *Introduction to Brahma Sūtra*, p. 75.
2. Devaraja, N. K,, *Introduction to Śaṁkara's Theory of Knowledge*, p. 21.

of technique or method. It seems that the Vedāntin has made use of the dialectics and the analysis of illusion of Buddhism in his own way. He makes the distinction between *Vyavahāra* and *Paramārtha* in order to establish the sole reality of Brahman. It cannot be said with justification that these absolutistic notions, and the technique itself, were present in the Upaniṣads. But this influence was not one sided; it was mutual. Just as Buddhism impressed the Vedānta, similarly Buddhism was also influenced by the Vedānta tradition. For this kind of mutual influence was just natural as they grew together, though in opposition, but not in isolation.[1]

6. The Advaita Vedanta

Like all other absolutistic systems the Vedānta absolutism grows on the foundation of the Sāṁkhya metaphysics. That the Vedānta has close affinity with the Sāṁkhya can be observed from the fact that the author of the Brahma Sūtras finds it necessary to refute the Sāmkhya centention that it rcpresented the true teachings of the Upaniṣads. Against the Sāṁkhya, the early Vedāntins emphasised the integral unity or oneness of reality. But in this attempt they gave up the lofty ideal of purity of consciousness—the ideal which was so carefully kept in view by the Sāṁkhya. Perhaps, they lost sight of the ideal because their main aim was to build a consistent and systematic monism on the basis of Upaniṣads. The Vedāntin coneeives reality to be the *unity* which evolves itself as multiplicity. Accepting fully the Sāṁkhya doctrine of causation *Sat-kārya-vāda*, he ascribes ultimate causality to Brahman. The Sāṁkhya itself contains suggestions to this effect when it makes Puruṣa the real source of the activity of Prakṛti. However, the early Vedāntin ignores the problem regarding the 'how' and 'why' of creation. The Sāṁkhya made serious attempt to solve this problem but failed.

The monistic standpoint of the early Vedāntins did not appear fully satisfactory to Vedāntins like Gauḍapāda and

1. CPB, op. cit.

Śaṁkara. They realized that the view according to which creation, change, relations etc. were real is logically untenable. Consistency demands that all such categories should be rigidly excluded from any monistic scheme of things. Ultimately monism has to give way to advaitism. This means that there can be no real modification of Brahman. The later Vedāntins, following the lead of Śaṁkara, devoted themselves to the establishment of advaitism.

Gauḍapāda is recognized to be the first important expounder of Vedānta Advaitism. He tries to establish that there can be no real creation out of Brahman. The doctrine of non-origination is the sole truth according to him.[1] The practical world, which people regard as real, is infact no more real than a dream world. The two worlds differ only from the point of view of externality. While the practical world is external to the knowing subject, the dream world is internal to him[2] It is obvious that that which is non-existent in the beginning as well as in the end cannot have existence in the middle also.[3] The immortal can never become mortal, the mortal can never be immortal. For, the ultimate nature of a thing cannot change.[4] According to Gauḍapāda those passages in the Scripture which seem to account for the world in terms of creation should be interpreted as devices to teach the identity of Brahman and the world.[5]

On the analogy of the experience of dream and illusion, Gauḍapāda attempts to show how a thing could appear as different from what it is and also how appearance could be mistaken to be real. He is anxious to establish the absoluteness of the Self, as opposed to the Anātmavāda absolutism of the Buddhists, and asserts that the appearance of multiplicity depends upon the non-dual Ātman in the same way in which the appearance of snake depends upon the rope.[6]

1. Māndūkya Kārikā II. 27. 8.
2. Ibid II. 4.
3. Ibid 4. 13.
4. Ibid III. 19-21 ; IV 6-7.
5. Ibid III. 15.
6. Ibid II. 32-3.

There is complete identity between Brahman and Jīva ; the difference between them is merely apparent and is due to *avidyā*.[1] The unborn is born in manifold ways through māyā.[2] The Real can be born only through *māyā* and not in reality ; the unreal, however, can be born neither really nor phenomenally.[3]

Śaṁkara, a great grand pupil of Gauḍapāda, occupies a somewhat similar position in the Vedānta tradition to the one occupied by Nagārjuna in the Buddhist tradition. The revolution which he brought about in the Vedānta destroyed the weak pillars of the tradition and built it on stable and solid rock of advaitism. He further developed Vedāntism on the lines of advaitism, the lead for which was already given by Gauḍapāda. He may truly be said to owe to Gauḍapāda the doctrine of illusory manifestation[4] Śaṁkara's real greatness lies in his successful attempt at the systematization of the scattered thoughts of the Vedānta tradition. He alone appears to be able to give significance to the conflicting texts of the Scripture. In contrast with the other Vedānta teachers, Śaṁkara has the rare capacity for explaining the Scriptures in their entirety. He finds no difficulty in explaining consistently the apparently theistic and dualistic teachings of his predecessors.

The grounds on which the early Vedāntins rejected the Sāmkhya postulation of two eternal realities could equally be pressed against the Vedānta monism. Accordingly, Śaṁkara points out that, for similar reasons, Brahman too cannot be conceived as possessing mutually opposed characteristics. It is not justified to hold that Brahman transforms itself in the world and yet transcends all change. Nothing can simultaneously be subject to change and remain beyond change. The doctrine of real transformation *(Pariṇāma vāda)* cannot stand the scrutiny of reasoning. At the hands of Śaṁ-

1. Ibid II. 37.
2. Ibid II. 24.
3. Ibid II. 27-8.
4. Devaraja, Op. cit., p. 230.

kara and his followers, *Pariṇāmavāda* gives way to the doctrine of illusory manifestation *(Vivartavāda)*, simple monism to rigorous non-dualism, and the concept of Prakṛti or Śakti-to the concept of Māyā.

Of all the Vedāntins, Śaṁkara has been often criticised as being a hidden Buddhist *(Pracchanna Bauddha)*. Some of his near contemporaries, such as Bhāskara and others, have accused him of abandoning the tradition. According to them Śaṁkara has given a false interpretation of the Brahma Sūtras in terms of *māyāvāda*, which has its roots in the Mahāyāna Buddhism.[1] It seems that Śaṁkara himself was aware of the similarity between his system and Buddhism. That is why he asserts that whatever resemblance is there between the two systems is merely accidental or superficial.[2] That the resemblance is not substantial is also evident from the fact that in many of his works Śaṁkara has openly criticised the Buddhists. Moreover, the Buddhists themselves do not find such resemblance. On the other hand, they take pains to distinguish their standpoint from that of the Vedāntins.[3]

Śaṁkara appeared like a luminous sun on the horizon of Vedānta. During his presence little attention was paid to the other scholars in the tradition. The post Śaṁkara Vedānta does not represent, strictly speaking, any significant or original contribution towards Advaitism. In this period there arose differences among the Advaitins about the nature and status of illusion. The post Śaṁkara Vedāntins devote greater attention to the epistemological, rather than metaphysical, analysis of illusion Some of them introduce *vivarta* or illusory relationship to explain the relationship between Brahman and World. According to Mandana the relation between Brahman and 'Nothing' is no relation at all. It is an entity which is absolutely indescribable, *anirvacanīya*.

1. महायानिकम् बौद्ध ग्रथितम् मायावादम्
   Bhāskara's commentary on the Brahma Sutra I. IV. 25.
2. Śaṁkara's Commentary on Māndūkya Kārikā, IV. 99.
3. Upadhyaya Baldeva, Samkaracarya.

Śaṁkara did not committ himself to a rigid position on any issue. He did not offer a definite view regarding the question whether there are many souls or only one. Similarly he avoids the question of the locus and object of avidyā. In his analysis of the nature of creation Śaṁkara even seems to adopt the doctrine of *Pariṇāma* and at places uses the analogy of milk and curd.[1]

It is such vagueness in Śaṁkara which gave rise to differences of opinion among his followers. Some of them, belonging to the *Vivaraṇa* school, hold that *avidyā* resides in Brahman. But those who belong to the *Bhāmati* school ascribe to the view that *avidyā* resides in the Jīva.

1. Potter, K., Op. cit., pp. 165-6.

CHAPTER THREE

EMERGENCE OF ŚAIVA ABSOLUTISM

1. Atmavada and Anatmavada Controversy and the emergence of Saiva Absolutism

The transformation of Vedāntism into a systematic Advaitism made a tremendous impact upon entire Indian thought. The wind of Advaitism gathered sudden speed and began spreading over all traditions. It took many orthodox systems by surprise and violently shook their very foundations. Vedānta advāitism appeared to be a dangerously destructive force to various devotional cults, as it emerged within the orthodox Vedic tradition itself. In this advaitism devotion was sacrificed at the alter of knowledge. The original defensive positions of the theists and others crumbled down before the powerful attacks of the Advaitin's logic. It is during this hour of crisis that the Theists awoke from their dogmatic slumber.

When the Buddhist and the Vedāntins were engaged in the well known *ātmavāda* and *anātmavāda* controversy, theism silently underwent the process of self-purification. While the absolutists were concentrating their energies in the controversy, theistic systems were indulging in genuine self-criticism. Consequently when the echoes of the intellectual battle between the ātmavādins and the anātmavādins were no longer audible, theistic schools began reasserting themselves. Henceforth theism continues to assume the posture of self-assurance and confidence. During the period immediately following Śaṁkara two fully developed theistic systems emerged which achieved important place in Indian thought. Within the Vedānta tradition itself, Rāmānuja expounded the qualified monism (viśiṣṭādvaita) in which devotion occupies an exalted place. The other significant

development was the appearance of theistic absolutism within the Āgamic tradition. This *Iśvaradvayavāda* evolved in Northern Śaivism (i.e. Kashmir) and is based upon the monistic teachings of the Śaiva Āgamas.

The 'ātman-anātman controversy' greatly influenced the logical formulation of Śaiva Absolutism. It is well known that prior to the origin and developmeut of *Iśvaradvayavāda* the place of its birth (viz. the valley of Kashmir) has been an important centre of the 'controversy.' Accordingly, the Śaiva Absolutists found it useful to adopt an 'integral' approach towards the controversy between the Buddhists and the Vedāntins. The two extremes, of *ātman* and *anātman*, are perfectly harmonised in the integral vislon of the Śaivite. When the two mutually opposing lines of thought, *ātmavāda* and *anātmavāda*, attained complete maturity, Śaiva Absolutism or Integral Śaivism was born. The *Recognition* of Perfection or *Pūrṇatva* could become possible only when the concept of *Śūnya* and *Māyā* were formed. The Śaivite could then realize that the Śūnya itself appears as Māyā. The absolutely indeterminate or pure Śiva (Śunya) has an inscrutable and mysterious power called māyā or Śakti.

It seems that the recognition of *Pūrṇatva* can take place only when thought attains a certain level of perfection. It presupposes some amount of metaphysical reflection. Historically it grows after the fullest development of the controversy between the two absolutisms. Accordingly, a *two-fold absolutistic awareness* is an essential pre-requisite for the rise and growth of theistic absolutism, the Iśvaradvayavāda. First of all, there should be the recognition that the Real in itself is absolutely indeterminate. The Mādhyamikas were the first to indicate and to emphasise this indeterminate nature of reality. The Absolute transcends the categories of thought ; it cannot be described in terms of human thought, Thus the concept of *Śūnyatā* provided a metaphysical basis for the growth of Śaiva Absolutism. Another implication of Śunyatā was that

Saṁsāra and Nirvāṇa are the same ; there is no difference between the two.[1] The difference arises between them due to the psychological attitude of the person. Obviously this resembles the Śaiva conception of Pūrṇatva.[2] Secondly, it has also to be realized that the indeterminate Absolute (*Śūnya*) is the infinite consciousness (Vijñāna, Brahman) itself. It is the substratum or self of everything. The Yogācāra and the Vedāntin drew attention to this. The Advaita Vedāntins attempted, with great dialectical skill, to show that pure consciousness is the essential nature of ultimate Reality, which is Brahman or *Bhūmā*, the innermost essence of everything.

This two-fold realization was finally followed by the recognition that 'freedom' (*svātantrya*) is the essential nature of the absolute indeterminate consciousness. If the absolute consciousness be regarded as being devoid of freedom, there would be no significant difference between it and insentient matter (Jaḍa). Being devoid of freedom, the Absolute would become inert ; and the inert is 'nothing' in itself. Thus, the absoluteness of Brahman can be established only when *svātantrya* is attributed to it. The true recognition of the Absolute consists in the realization that the pure indeterminate consciousness is infinite freedom itself. The Absolute is the *Pūrṇa*, the supremely perfect and infinitely free Being.

The two lines of thought, the Ātmavāda and Anātmavāda, start with mutually opposite premises. But, curiously

1. न निर्वाणस्य संसारात्किञ्चिदस्ति विशेषणम् ।
निर्वाणस्य च या कोटि:, या कोटि: संसरणस्य च ।
न तयोरन्तरं किञ्चित् सुसूक्ष्मपि विद्यते ।
Mādhyamika Kārikā, XXX, 1920.

2. 'In the thought transcending experience of the wisdom of the Farther Bank (Prajñ Pāramitā) the ultimate polarity—that of Nirvāṇa and Saṁsāra, freedom and bondage is totally annihilated. Nirvāṇic serenity and the wild play of the world of forms are one and the same. Clearly, this is a Buddhistic parallel to the Śaivite Realization.' Zimmer. H., *Myths and Symbols*, p. 201.

enough, both ultimately arrive at a similar conclusion. The Anātmavādin begins with the basic assumption that only the discrete and momentary alone are real, the identical and permanent are unreal. But in the end he has to take recourse to the doctrine of *avidyā* in order to account for the experience of continuity and permanence. The Ātmavādin, on the other hand, begins with the assertion of the reality of Permanent Witness Consciousness and the denial of multiplicity and change. But he has to face insurmountable difficulties when he tries to explain the phenomenal appearances. Ultimately he too is compelled to resort to the principle of ignorance. Both the lines of thought, when pressed for logical consistency, really end in absolute 'void' (Śūnya), which is expressed only through complete silence. They could explain neither the practical life (*vyavahāra*), nor the ultimate (*Paramārtha*), without taking recourse to the theory of *avidyā*. Infact, both of them are confined only to the realm of duality, of self and not-self. The final conclusions of both are as untenable as is the dualistic hypothesis. Being sectarian and one-sided, they are unable to attain the true vision of the Absolute. The Śaiva Absolutist, therefore, is careful to avoid the pitfalls of dualism and attempts at harmonising the duality into integral unity (Sāmarasya). This leads to the formulation of an integral Ādvaitism in the Śaiva tradition.

Buddhist and Vedānta dialectics provide the basis for the development of the integral logic of the Śaivite. Skillfully employing the arguments of the one against the other, the Śaivite tries to bring home to both the Buddhists and the Vedāntins the untenablity of their standpoints. Against the former, he emphasises the need for accepting the permanent and the continuous. Employing the 'logic of identity', he tries to convince the Buddhist that without recognising 'unity' or 'identity' even the discrete and unique instants or absolute points could not be satisfactorily accounted for. Against the Ātmavādins, he points out that there would be no possibility of knowledge or experience if we do not accept the discrete and the varying. If multiplicity and

change were unreal, even the existence of the eternal Self cannot be established. The Anātmavādin is right in so far as he recognises the reality of the phenomena of change or becoming. But he is wrong when he denies the identical or permanent. Likewise, the Ātmavādin is also right in so far as he advocates the importance of Being. However, he is not justified in his attempts at establishing the illusoriness of all becoming.

The Śaiva Absolutist holds that both Being and Becoming, eternal and discrete, are given in experience. They cannot be regarded as unreal, for they are the manifestations of the Real by itself or in separation from the other, neither being nor becoming can be absolute. Reality is the integral unity of *being* and *becoming*, the supreme equilibrium or perfect identity (*Purṇa sāmarasya*) of Puruṣa and Prakṛti. Brahman and Māyā are not separate realities ; they are the two inseparable aspects of one integral reality. Reality is *Prakāśa Vimarśa*, or eternal self-becoming. It is Param Śiva or the Absolute Subject. In its essential nature, it is the Supreme 'I', *pūrṇa aham*. It is the perfect identity of eternal and momentary, for in it the eternal is momentary and the momentary is the eternal.

The elements which gave rise to the growth of 'integral' Śaiva Absolutism were present in the ancient Śaiva theology.[1] The Śaiva Absolutism is not entirely foreign to the Śaiva tradition. It is based upon the monistic teaching of the Āgamas. The philosophical genius of the Śaivites of Kashmir consists in the fact that they transformed the earlier monistic tendencies within their tradition into a systematic and well-developed Absolutism. They provided logical and epistemological basis for the growth of absolutistic Śaivism.

2. Kashmir Saivism and other Systems

We have seen above that the recognition of the *Pūrṇa Advaita* could have been possible only after the full develop-

1. Zimmer, Op. cit. part III, Chapt. V

ment of the controversy between the Buddhists and the Vedāntins. The courageous esoterism of the Tantras and Tantric Mahāyāna have been supposed to be the last synthesising attempt of Indian philosophical tradition.[1] Not only that, we can even go a step further and contend that the logical formulation or systematic presentation of absolutistic Śaivism could be possible only when the traditional Indian thought attained maturity. It has been claimed that 'through this system, which is based upon personal experience, the subject matter of Mimāṁsā, Nyāya, Vyākaraṇa and Śaivāgama becomes helpful in the realization of the Self. For no other than the sun is capable of uniting the juices (*rasa*) of earth and water for the development of grains'[2] There is a tradition in the system according to which a proper understanding of it requires a prior knowledge of the six Vedic schools of thought and of the Vedas with its six branches as an antecedent condition. Besides, it also requires knowledge of all Āgamas, an acquaintance with the reasoning of other systems and command over grammar.

Kashmir Śaivism is a well developed system. It rightly deserves a place amongst the great philosophies of the world. However, it is unfortunate that at present we do not have a sufficient knowledge of its history and its background. This is primarily due to a lack of interest in the subject and, secondly, due to the absence of contact with the tradition, which is almost dead now. It is only during the last decade that the system has been brought to light.

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1. Brahmanic Philosophy pronounced its last synthesising statement in the courageous esoterism of the Tantra and in the Tantric Mahāyāna. Zimmer, H., *Philosophies of India*, p. 601.

2. वाक्य प्रमाण पद तत्व सदागमार्थाः
स्वात्मोपयोगम् उपयान्त्यमुतः स्वशास्त्रात् ।
भौमान् रसाञ्जलमयांश्च न सस्यपुष्टौ
मुक्त्वार्कमेकमिह योजयितुं क्षमोऽन्यः ॥
Bhāskarī, Vol. II, p. 317. (IPV. IV. 1. 18.)

The development of the Śaiva thought in Kashmir, especially Kaulism, has been influenced by the teachings of the Upaniṣads. There is also a close affinity between Kashmir Śaivism and Gītā.[1] There are frequent quotations from the Upaniṣads in many texts of the system.

As a system the Sāṁkhya precedes all schools of Indian Philosophy. Like many other systems, the Tantric systems also can be regarded as being a development of the Sāṁkhya tradition of distinguishing between Puruṣa and Prakṛti. Sāṁkhya dualism played a significant role in the development of absolutistic Śaivism. The concepts of Puruṣa and Prakṛti greatly influenced the formation of the concepts of Śiva and Śakti. That is why in some of its aspects Kashmir Śaivism inclines heavily towards the Sāṁkhya. However, the affinity between them could not be more pervasive and enduring mostly because of the Sāṁkhya tendency towards atheism. But the Sāṁkhya impact upon the Śaiva thought is obvious. The Goddess has been described in the Tantras as the active force in the manifestation of the universe, while Śiva has been conceived to be a mere witness.[2] The Śaiva Absolutist holds that the Lord, the holy Śeṣa, taught the knowledge of attaining Brahman according to the method of instruction advocated in the Sāṁkhya, by drawing a distinction between Puruṣa and Prakṛti and finally rising to the conception of supreme unity in Śiva.[3]

The Buddhist thought was predominant in Kashmir before the emergence of absolutistic Śaivism. Though Śaivism has its own ancient tradition, as we have already seen, and seems to be the native faith of Kashmir, yet there has been a tremendous influence of Buddhism upon its development.

1. This becomes clear from the fact that Abhinavagupta and Rajānaka Ramakantha have attempted a commentary on the Gītā from the Śaiva point of view.

2. Yadubanshi, *Śaiva Mata*, pp. 116-7.

3. सांख्यनयोक्तोपदेशानुसारेण प्रकृतिपुरुषविवेकज्ञानात् परब्रह्मावाप्तिः ।
Paramārthasāra, p. 7.

Prior to the advent of Buddhism in Kashmir, Śaivism was confined to a simple form of worship.[1] It is the Buddhist concept of Śūnyatā which provided the metaphysical foundation for the growth of integral Advaitism within the Śaiva tradition. The influence of Śūnyavāda upon Tāntricism has been widely recognised. With its phenomenalising aspect *Karuṇā*, which in many respects resembles the Śaiva concept of *Śakti*, the *Śūnya* manifests itself as the concrete world. But the forms neither exhaust, nor modify the absolute in any sense. Further, it is through these forms that the individual ascends to the level of the absolute.[2]

It has been supposed that Śaṁkara had close affinity with Tāntricism. Attempts have been made to establish Śaṁkara's close intimacy with Tantra on the basis of the alleged Tāntric character of some works, such as Subhagodaya, Saundarya Laharī etc., attributed to Śaṁkara. But unless the authenticity of these works is proved, this point would not lead us anywhere. For, it is also probable that some of these works might have been forged by the Tāntrikas under Śaṁkara's name. Similarly the claim that infact Śaṁkara believed in the *Pratyabhijñā* principle and has declared so in many places'[3] has not yet been finally established. However, there are some indications of Śaṁkara's affinity to *Pratyabhijñā* thought. Śaṁkara himself was a great devotee of Śrī-Vidyā, which has many similarities with the *Pratyabhijñā*. The authorship of *Prapañcasāra* also has been attributed to Śaṁkara. There prevailed the popular view that Śaṁkara wrote the commentary on the Brahma Sūtras after repeatedly reflecting upon *Sūta Saṁhitā*,[4] which contains teachings similar to Śaiva Absolutism. If *Dakshināmūrti Stotra*

1. Pandey, K. C., *Abhinavagupta*; Also, Kaviraj, G., *Philosophy: Eastern and Western*, Vol. I, p. 292.
2. CPB, p. 109.
3. Kaviraj, G., *Bhāratīya Saṁskṛti aur Sādhanā*, pp. 11-16
4. तमष्टादसधालोच्य शंकरः सूतसंहिताम्
चक्रे शारीरकम् भाष्यम् सर्ववेदान्तनिर्णयम् ।

could be regarded as a work of Śaṁkara, then his relationship with Tāntricism can easily be established.[1] The fact that many adherents of Śaivism and Śāktism, like Bhāskara Ray and others, began referring to Śaṁkara as an authority after his death also points out the relationship.[2] The construction of Kāmākśhī temple at *Kāñcī* at the initiation of Śaṁkara, establishment of the worship of Paśupatinātha in Nepal by him, his interest in bringing the lingam from Kailāśa, might also be regarded as some of the significant pointers in his context. Moreover, Śaṁkara's influence on Kashmir Śaivism can very well be judged from the fact that this system could develop only after Saṁkara has visited Kashmir. The visit of Śaṁkara proved to be of great help to the local Śaivites in their struggle against Buddhism, which has been a serious challenge to them. It appears as if the great Master of Vedānta cleared the way for the rise and advancement of Śaiva Absolutism.

3. Kashmir Saivism

The absolutistic development of the Śaiva tradition in Kashmir is not opposed to the spirit of Śaivism. In fact, advaitism seems to be the very essence of the Āgamas. The brilliant jewel of Śaiva Advaitism (of Kashmir) could be discovered only through a thorough churning of the Āgamas, like *Svacchanda*, Mālinī Vijaya etc., and of the *Nigamas* like the Taittrīya Saṁhitā.[3]

Abhinavagupta has given an account of the Āgamic tradition in his *Tantrāloka*.[4] The Āgamas originally consisted of nine crore (ninty million) verses. They disappeared in

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1. On this point Prof. S. S. Suryanarayan Sastri holds that it is possible that more than one Pratyabhijñā work has derived from advaita sources, where, in a work like the Dakṣnāmūrtistotra, there are many points common to advaita and Pratyabhijñā, it will rest without further evidence to conclude the derivation of either of the two.. Collected Works, University of Madras, 1961, pp. 223-24.
2. Kaviraj G., Op. cit. p. 292.
3. Kaviraj, G., Introduction to Pratyabhijñā, *Alakā*, p. 4.
4. 35th Āhnika.

Kaliyuga (the last of the four periods of the world cycle, the period in which we are living now). However, at the instruction of Śrīkantha sage Durbāsā imparted Āgamic thought to his mind-born sons, Trambyaka, Āmardaka and Śrinātha, after dividing it into three classes, monism, dualism and dualistic monism, respectively. The Śaiva Absolutism of Kashmir is based upon the sixtyfour monistic Śaiva Āgamas. It is difficult to determine the exact nature of the development of monistic Śaivism at present, as many of these Āgamas are not available, nor is it the task of the present work.

Kashmir Śaivism has been referred to as *Pratyabhijñā Darśana* by Madhva in *Sarva Darśana Saṁgraha.* Some modern writers also prefer to call it by this name. But the entire Śaiva thought of Kashmir cannot be identified with the Pratyabhijñā. For, according to Dr. K. C. Pandey and others, the Śaiva monism of Kashmir includes many important branches or systems, the Pratyabhijñā being one of them. There are three clearly distinct branches of thought within Kashmir Śaivism, viz. *Krama*, *Kaula* and *Pratyabhijñā.*[1] In the Krama system, the worship of Śakti occupies an important place. The means adopted here are called *Śāktopāya.* As there is a greater emphasis upon the 'will' in the Kula system, accordingly the means adopted in Kaulism may be described as *Śāmbhavopāya.* However, there is no restriction whatsoever with regards to the object of worship as well as the means to be adopted for worship in Pratyabhijñā. Because there is no restriction about the means, in this system, it prescribes the path called *anupāya* or *Pratyabhijñopāya.*[2]

The term '*trika*' is often used for the entire Śaiva thought of Kashmir. The term refers to both the authority on which it is based and the subject matter which forms the

1. The analysis of these schools is mainly based upon Dr. K. C. Pandey's account. See Pandey, K. C., op. cit., pp. 295-97.
2. The present work is based mostly upon the texts belonging to the *Pratyabhijñā* branch of Kashmir Śaivism.

distinctive feature of the system. The system is called Trika also because the chief authority on which it is based is the triad of Āgamas, viz. *Siddha*, *Nāmaka* and *Mālinī*.[1] Moreover, the system admits three triads, called the *Parā* or the higher, the *Aparā* or lower, and the *Parāparā* or combination of both the higher and lower. *Parā* consists of Śiva, Śakti and their union ; *Aparā* includes Śiva, Śakti and Nara.[2] It is also called Trika as it deals with identity, identity-cum-difference and difference. This term seems to have been used mostly for the Pratyabhijñā branch of Kashmir Śaivism.

The Krama

Emphasis upon *Krama* or the different stages of manifestation of consciousness constitutes the chief characteristic of the Krama system. Unlike the other systems of Kashmir Śaivism, the Krama pays great attention to different psychological stages in the process of realization and the corresponding mystic categories. It is primarily confined to a detailed consideration of the various states of consciousness. While Kaulism might be described as the path of 'Will' and *Pratyabhijñā* as the path of Recognition, the Krama is essentially a path of knowledge or reflection. According to Kśhemarāja, rituals occupy an important place in the Krama path. The followers of the Kaula path, on the other hand, are prohibited to perform rituals. The Pratyabhijñā neither prescribes nor prohibits the performance of rituals. These systems further differ as regards the conception of *Parā* Śakti. Parā has been conceived as the highest state of realisation and is called *Mahābhairava Caṇḍograghora Kālī* in the Krama system. This final state is attained only when the determinate consciousness is purified after passing through eleven successive stages, which are the manifestations of *Parā Saṃvid* or absolute consciousness. It has been conceived as *Kaulikī Śakti* in Kaulism. It is always in unity with *akula* or *anuttara*, the

1. Tantrāloka I. 49, I. 35.
2. T. A. I. 7-21

transcendent Absolute. In the Pratyabhijñā, Parā is regarded as identical with *svātantrya Śakti.*[1]

The Krama is essentially the path of knowledge, *Śaktopāya.* According to it, knowledge of the true nature of the *Cakras* leads the individual to a realization of the Absolute. The knowledge of the *Pañcavāha* also brings about release ; the ignorance of its true nature, on the other hand, causes bondage. Correct reasoning (sattarka), also referred to as *bhāvanā* or *sadvidyā*, removes the ignorance regarding the true nature of self. Though various disciplines might be useful, ultimately it is the *sattarka* alone which leads to realization.[2] Depending upon the differences in the capacity and temperaments of the individuals, we have to admit various other means for self-realization.[3]

As it regards *Kālī* to be the highest reality, the Krama is also called *Kālīnaya, Devīnaya, Mahānaya* or *Mahārtha Darśana.*[4] Krama was first taught by Śiva (Bhairava) to Śakti (Bhairavi) *Kramasadbhāva, Krama siddhi, Brahma yāmata Tantrarāja Bhaṭṭāraka, Kramodaya, Pañcaśatīka, Krama stotra, Mahānaya Prakāśa, Mahārtha Mañjarī, Tantrāloka, Dehastha Devatā Cakra stotra* and *Kramakeli* are the important works dealing with the Krama concepts.

According to this system the universe is nothing but a manifestation of consciousness and exists in it in an ideal form. The Absolute might be described both as Śiva and as Śakti. However, most of the followers of the Krama hold *Kāli* or *Parā Saṃvid* to be the Absolute. But Somānanda, the founder of the Pratyabhijñā school, asserts that Kālī or Śakti cannot be the highest reality. According to him it is the convention among Grammarians that the feminine always depends upon the masculine.[5] But ultimately all agree

1. Pandey, K. C., op. cit., pp. 506-8
2. T. A. III. 3, 102
3. Ibid III. 62.
4. Ibid III. 193-196.
5. SD, p. 94

that the Absolute in-itself is neither masculine nor feminine. At the most it might be described as equally male and female, or half male and half female *(ardha nārīśvara)*.

Kālī manifests the objects which are essentially one with it. It also represents the power which evolves and devours the entire objectivity. The Kālī is also called *Mātṛsadbhāva*, as the whole of experience is its manifestation. It is also referred to as *Vyomavāmeśvarī*, which is nothing but *cit Śakti*, as it continuously vomits or evolves the universe. It is like a lake from which four currents, viz *Khecarī*, *Dikcarī*, *Gocarī* and *Bhūcarī*, flow out. In so far as it transcends time, the Kālī is also called *Kāla saṁkarṣiṇī*.

The conception of twelve forms of *Kālī* occupies a significant place in the Krama. The four aspects of consciousness, viz. *sṛṣṭi*, *sthiti*, *saṁhāra* and *anākhya*, have been represented in the form of circles *(cakras)* having ten, twenty-two, eleven and twelve forms respectively. In the fourth state, the *anākhya* aspect, *Kālī* appears in twelve successive forms in the experience of the Yogin, when these states are related to the knower, the known and the means of knowledge. *Sṛṣṭi Kālī*, *rakta Kālī*, *sthitināśa Kālī* and *Yama Kālī* represent the four states in relation to the object of knowledge. *Saṁhāra kālī*, *mṛtyu kālī*, *rudrakālī* or *bhadrakālī*, and *mārtandakālī* stand for the states in relation to the means of knowledge. *Paramārka Kālī*, *Kālānala rudra Kālī*, *mahākāla Kālī* and *mahabhairava candogra ghora Kālī* represent the states in relation to the knower. As each of the twelve Kālīs is present in the other, they are also supposed to be one hundred and forty four in number. However, the real nature of these Kālīs is not openly taught in the system. They are secret mystic symbols which have been so described in order to confuse the ordinary people about their true nature.[1]

When the absolute consciousness shines in these forms, its essential nature is not affected. Like an actor assuming

1. T. A. III. 61

various roles during the play, the *Parā Saṃvid* expresses itself through these forms and yet remains unaffected in its essential nature.

The cakras seem to have been conceived on the analogy of the dynamic circle of light expressed through the circular movement of some burning or shining object. They are symbolic representations of the operation of powers of consciousness. These powers operate in such a quick succession that their continuous succession is not noticeable. The dynamic circles indicate the recurrence of the functions of these powers. Continuously succeeding one another, each of these powers passes into the other without being noticed. Every moment is subject to the powers of creation etc., which succeed one another like the flames of a lamp.

The *Pañcavāha* represents the five basic forms of manifestation of Absolute. The pentad consisting of *cit*, *ānanda*, *icchā*, *jñāna* and *kriyā* represents the five aspects or powers of Lord. *Parā*, *Sūkśmā*, *Paśyanti*, *Madhyamā* and *Vaikharī* constitute the pentad representing the five forms of speech. The various pentads are nothing but forms of reality described from different points of view.

Kaulism

Kaulism has been practised throughout India. The original Kaula wisdom appeared as *Mahat* Kaula in the second period of the world cycle *(tretāyuga)*, as *Siddha* Kaula in the third period *(dvāpara)*, and as *Matsyodara* Kaula in the fourth, i.e. present, period *(Kaliyuga)*.[1] Lord Śiva is supposed to be the real originator of all forms of Kaulism. It was propounded by *Khagendra* in the first period, by *Kūrma* in the second period, by *Meṣa* in the third, by *Matsyendra* or *Macchanda* in the fourth period.[2] *Siddhayoginīśvara mata*, *Malinīvijayottara*, *Rudrāyāmala Tantra*, *Kutārṇava Tantra*, *Nityā ṣoḍaśikārṇava*, *Svacchanda Tantra*,

1. *Kaul jñāna Nirṇaya*, 16th Patal, 46-9.
2. Dwivedi, Hazari Prasad, '*Nātha Sampradāya*' pp. 57-60.

Netra Tantra, *Tantra Rāja*, *Parātriṁśikā Vivaraṇa* and *Tantrāloka* are some of the important texts on Kaulism.

As the terms *kula* and *akula* mean Śakti and Śiva, Kaulism might be described as the path in which attempts are made to unite *kula* and *akula*[1]. Śiva is called *akula*, as it is pure partless non-dual Being, and Śakti is called *kula*, the entirety of universal existence. Accordingly, Kaulas are those who worship the Kula. Further, as the root '*Kula*' means to grossify or to put together members of the same family, Kaulism is the belief that the universe is an unity of knower, known and knowing. Being essentially identical with consciousness, all the members of this unity are referred to as Kula or members of the same family. Kaulism is the belief in absolute unity.[2] The term Kula is also used for the *Kundalinī*. Hence Kaulism is the path in which the awakened Kundalinī rises and finally attains unity with Parama Śiva in the thousand-petal lotus *(sahastrār)*.[3] It also refers to the final cause, viz. *Piṇda*. All the objects have their being in the *Piṇda* in an undifferentiated form just as the various colours of the peacock have their being in the egg. The term is also used sometimes for the self.[4]

Kaulism has close affinity with the krama and Pratyabhijñā. Like krama, it also recommends the worship of the cakras. *Anupāya* or Pratyabhijñopāya is the highest state of *Śāmbhavopāya*, the path adopted in Kaulism. Accordingly Kaulism, in its final state is identical with the Pratyabhijñā.[5] It is the highest thought as it has been originated from the uppermost mouth of Śiva *(urdhvāmnāya)*. It is the 'higher path' because it transcends all moral or

1. कुलं शक्तिरिति प्रोक्तमकुलं शिव उच्यते
   कुले अकुलेस्य सम्बन्धः कौलमित्यभिधीयते । सौभाग्यभास्कर, p. 53
2. *Kaula mārga Rahasya*, pp. 4-6.
3. *Saubhāgya Bhāskara*, p. 53 ; *Goraksa Siddhānta Saṁgraha*, p. 13.
4. Pandey, K. C., op. cit. pp. 596, 863.
5. T. A. I. 182.

physical laws whereas there is a dichotomy between enjoyment and release (*bhoga* and *mokśa*) in ordinary life, Kaulism aims at a complete synthesis between them by showing the path of perfection through enjoyment. Both *bhoga* and *mokśa* become easily available to those who follow the 'Kula Path.'[1] In other spiritual disciplines renunciation is regarded as the most essential pre-requisite for self-realization. Enjoyment of worldly pleasures is supposed to be the greatest obstacle in these disciplines. Enjoyment no longer remains an obstacle for a Kaula but becomes a means of release. It is the central belief of Kaulism that whereas the ignorant, the *Paśu*, is bound by worldly pleasures the learned hero (*vīra*) utilises them for the quickest attainment of spiritual ends.

The conduct of a Kaula (*Kulācāra*) is supposed to be the highest amongst the seven kinds of conduct or *ācāra*. The first four *ācāra*, viz. *Vedācāra*, *Vaiśnavācāra*, *Śaivācāra* and *Dakśinācara*, are meant for individuals who are bound by prohibitions and injunctions. As they are bound by moral and other laws, these individuals might be called *Paśus* or animals.[2] The remaining three *ācāra* are meant only for the heroes or *Vīra*.. The *Vedācāra* is the lowest form of *ācāra* and consists of prescribed act, sacrifices and rituals enjoined in the Vedas. The *Vaiśṇavācāra* lays greater emphasis upon vegetarianism, fasts, festivals and ceremonies. The *Śaivācāra* mostly consists of devotion to Śiva and Śakti and other aspects of spiritual discipline. The use of intoxi-

1. भोगयोगात्मकम् कौलम् तस्मात् सर्वाधिकं प्रिये ।

Kulārṇava III. 23.

यत्रास्ति भोगो न तु तत्र योगो, यत्रास्ति मोक्षो न तु तत्र भोग:
श्रीसुन्दरीसाधकपुंगवानां भोगश्च मोक्षश्च करस्थ एव ।

Rudrayāmal Tantra

2. The *Sādhakas* might be classified into three classes, viz, animals or *Paśus*, heroes or *Vīras*, and divine or *divyas*. The *Paśu* is at the lowest level of self-realization. The Vīra is one who has transcended all distinctions in life. The sādhaka is called Divya who is at the highest state of realization.

cants and recital of mantras have also been recommended in the *Dakśinācāra*. The self has been conceived in terms of Śakti or Power (*Vāmā*) in the *Vāmācāra*. The followers of the *Siddhāntācāra* realize absolute non-difference and become firmly established in *advaitism*. Those who follow the *Kulācāra* know that all laws are mere productions of childish imagination.[1]

Infact, Kaulism is supposed to represent the essence of entire Indian thought. It is the ulimate goal of all disciplines. Like life in the body, fragrance in the flowers, oil in the oil seeds, Kaulism pervades the whole of Indian culture.[2]

The Absolute, according to the Kaulas, is an integral unity of *Prakāśa* and *Vimarśa*, *Anuttara* and *Anuttarā*, *akula* and *Kula*. The conception of anuttara is very significant in Kaulism. There are sixteen explanations of the term Anuttara from different viewpoints.[3] From the mystic point of view, Anuttara stands for the experience in which the initiate becomes identical with the Absolute or Bhairava. In its epistemological significance Anuttara is the presupposition of all knowledge. It is the highest reality with regard to which no question or answer is possible, as it transcends

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1. Akula Vīra Tantra, 17-20, 26-8, 78-87.
2. मथित्वा ज्ञानमन्थेन वेदागममहार्णवम्
   सर्वज्ञेन मया देवि ! कुलधर्मः समुद्धृतः ।
   Kularṇava II, 10

   पुष्पे गन्धस्तिले तैलं देहे जीवो जलेऽमृतम् ।
   यथा तथैव शास्त्राणां कुलमन्तः प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥
   Tantrāloka XXXII, 373-4

   वेदादिभ्यः परं शैवं शैवाद्वामं च दक्षिणम् ।
   दक्षिणाच्च परं कौलं कौलात्परतरं नहि ।
   Ibid I. 48
3. अनुत्तरं तद्धृदयं हृदये ग्रन्थिरूपता ।
   ग्रन्थि षोडशधा ज्ञात्वा कुर्यात्कर्म यथासुखम् ॥
   P T II, 31

the thirty-six tattvas.[1] Anuttara represents the self-luminous absolute consciousness which is devoid of all limitations. It is the highest state realized by a Kaula. It stands for the state of identity of the Universe with the Supreme I-consciousness. In fact, Anuttara alone is the pure 'I' and is nothing but free consciousness.[2]

Jagadānanda is supposed to be the highest state of bliss in Kaulism. *Prāṇa, apāna, udāna, samāna* and *vyāna* are the five particular ways in which the 'Vital air' functions. Corresponding to these there are six successive levels of experience which finally lead to the experience of Anuttara. These levels of experience of bliss are called *nijānanda, nirānanda, paramānanda, brahmānanda, mahānanda* and *cidānanda.* The experience of the highest bliss, the *Jagadīnanda*, becomes possible when all forms of 'vital air' enter into the central nerve (*śuṣumnā*). It is the experience of the perfect unity of Śiva and Śakti, the realization of Anuttara.[3] The unity of *anuttara* and *anuttarā* and the evolution of the letters have been explained on the analogy of sex-union in the Kula system.[4]

Release has been described as *Khecarīsāmya, Khecarīsamatā* or *Kaulikī siddhi.* In the state of release the Kaula attains union with Bhairava. The entire objectivity appears as pure bliss to the Sādhaka who has realized *Kaulikī siddhi.* In the state of *Khecarīsāmya,* he looks upon the different states of mind and the causes which induce them as identical with the Self or anuttara.

The Kaula path of 'will', *Śāmbhavopāya,* is also called *icchopāya, anayāpāya, abhedopāya, sākśādupāya, anuttaropāya, ātmopāya.* As it is mostly concerned with the triad of Śiva, Śakti and their union (*yāmala*), Kaulism emphasises the

1. 'उत्तरं च शब्दनं तत् सर्वथा 'इदृशं तादृशम्' इति व्यवच्छेदं कुर्यात्, तत् यत्र न भवति अव्यवच्छिन्नम् 'इदम्' अनुत्तरम् । Ibid, 21.
2. Pandey, K. C., op. cit. pp. 635-45.
3. T. A. V. 356
4. Pandey, op. cit. pp. 652-67.

practical aspect of realization of this unity. It is mainly the way of practice, having no gulf between theory and practice. Ignorance cannot be removed through a mere verbal knowledge of the Scripture. The attempt to do so would be like trying to dispel darkness by a mere talk of the lamp[1].

The practical aspect of Kaula realization consists in the performance of the Kaula ritual, generally as a test to find out whether the Sādhaka has really attained identity with anuttara and continues to remain in the state of identity even in the most difficult situations[2]. Though the ritual is a sort of test to determine whether the individual has control over mind and senses, often it is also performed as a means to realize identity with the Absolute or the attainment of pure bliss. It is the principle rite, the *ādiyāga*[3].

One's ability to perform the Kaul ritual does not depend upon age, caste or sex, etc. It is not at all essential that one should be born in a high caste (*varṇa*) or strictly adhere to the duties of one's age (*āsrama*) in order to be eligible to perform the ritual. There are no such distinctions within the circle of the initiated[4]. He who makes caste distinctions out of his caste pride when in Cakra, he goes to a fearful hell, be he the most excellent among the knowers of the Vedānta[5]. For, a Kaula is simply one who is devoted to the Kula[6].

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1. संसारमात्रनाशाय शाब्दबोधो नहि क्षम:
न निवर्तेत तिमिरं कदाचिद्दीपशिखावार्तया । Kulārṇava I. 99.
2. अत्र निर्विकल्पवृत्तीनां महात्मनां ज्ञानिनामेव अधिकारो येषां स्ववृत्ति— प्रतिक्षेपेण संविदद्वैते एव किमेकाग्रीभूतं चेतो न वेति प्रत्यवेक्षामात्रे एव अनुसन्धानम् । T. A. 29.73-4
3. Ibid. 29.42-3.
4. Svacchanda Tantra, II. 329.
Kulārṇava II. 50.
5. वर्णाभिमानाच्चक्रे तु वर्णभिदं करोति यः...... ।
Mahānirvāṇa Tantra, 8th Ullāsa.
6. Kulārṇava II. 68

Worship is performed in the Kaula ritual through the use of five ingredients, the *Pañcamakāra*, viz. *madya* or liquor, *māṁsa* or meat, *matsya* or fish, *mudrā*,[1] and *maithuna* or sexual union. The first half of the ritual (*Purvārdha*) is mostly preparatory for the second half (*uttarārdha*) and is concerned with the external worship (*bāhyapūjā*). The second half constitutes the central part of the ritual and is known as mystic worship (*rahasya pūjā*). Idea (*Bhāvanā*) plays an important role in the ritual. While performing the ritual the Sādhaka mentally recites the *mantras* as in order to realize his identity with *Bhairava*. The use of the *Pañca makāras*, which is prohibited in the Scriptures, is prescribed primarily as a means of realizing the identity. This is brought about by merging the finite individuality in the absolute consciousness through the continuous repitition of the Mantras.[2] During this process the sādhaka aims at arousing the Kundalinī, the serpent Power, or sending the vital air to the uppermost part of the central nerve (*suṣumnā*). The sacrifice is done as an oblation to the Goddess, for Kundalinī, the coiled up energy of the Kula, is the microscopic aspect of the universal Śakti[3]. Accordingly, when the Kaula drinks wine or uses the other ingredients. he thinks that it is not he, an ephemeral individual, who is using them, but that they are being offered to the Goddess Kundalinī. Besides being always conscious that he is offering the ingredients to the Goddess, the sādhaka continues repeating his specific Mantra.

The use of the *makāras* is supposed to have great significance in the ritual. 'With liquors, meat, fish, mudrā and maithuna, the great *Sādhu* should worship the mother of the

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1. The mudrā in Hindu Tantra means parched grain or kidney beams, any cereal aphrodisiac; in Buddhist Tantra it means the female partner or adept; in Hindu and Buddhist non-Tāntric literature it most frequently means a ritualistic gesture. Agehānanda Bhārati, The Tāntric Tradition, P. 242.

2. T. A. 29.19,

3. Bhārati, Agehānanda, Op. Cit. pp. 260-1.

universe'[1]. For, he who worships the Goddess without these loses longevity, knowledge, wealth, etc.[2] Wine is the *Śiva rasa*, without which one can neither attain worldly pleasures nor liberation from the world[3]. The mere sight of wine frees an individual from all sins; its smell brings the fruit of performing a hundred sacrifices. Touching the wine is equal to visiting a hundred holy places. The use of wine brings about the release of four types and supreme bliss is realized. But wine is to be always used with meat[4].

Śakti or *Dūtī*, which in the female counterpart of the Sādhaka, is also required in the ritual. She should be a woman who can personify Śakti, should have excellent body and mind, and should be able to realize identity with *Bhairava*[5]. As it is difficult to find such a woman, generally the ability to attain such an identity alone has been emphasised. Preferably she should be a woman who has direct blood relationship with the *Sādhaka*, such as mother, sister, daughter etc[6].

Sometimes the Dūtī is brought to the scene only when the preparatory part of the ritual is over and the main part begins. But in other cases the Dūtī participates in the entire ritual[7]. The part of the ritual connected with the Dūtī, in which the fifth *makāra*, *maithuna*, is used, is kept secret. It is the exercise of sexual contact under 'laboratory' conditions[8]. In it, both the sādhakas, the male and the female, perform mutual worship and identify themselves with Śiva and Śakti. Though they should behave as male and female in sex union and satisfy all the senses, yet they should remain free from all attachment and not lose self

1. Kāmākhyā Tantra, 5th Patal,
2. Kaulavalī nirṇaya III,
3. T. A. 29. 8-9.
4. Kulārṇava 7 (47).
5. T. A. 29. 68-71,
6. The various types of Dūtīs has been discussed by Abhinavagupta in his Tantrāloka, Ahn. XXI.
7. Bhārati, Agehānanda, op. cit., p. 264.
8. Ibid. p. 228.

control.[1] When after the satisfaction of the senses *ānanda* becomes manifest both attempt at resting in it. This leads them to the realization of Anuttara, the unity of Śiva and Śakti.

Some objections against Kaul Practices

But the the Kaula ritual and certain practices of the left-handed Tantrics (*Vāmācārins*) have always been looked down by the orthodox Hindus. The *Vāmācāra* is a term of obvert abuse for all orthodox Hindus.[2] However, much of the criticism against Tantricism loses its force if we realize that an act is neither good nor bad, neither moral nor immoral, in itself. Morality is a relative concept and differs widely amongst different persons.[3] It is the fundamental principle of Tantricism that the rightness or wrongness of an act depends upon the attitude (*bhāvanā*) of the agent. The followers of the Tantras believe that everything is pure when accepted as identical with *saṁvid*, and even the pure becomes impure if it is regarded as separate from consciousness. No such distinction of pure and impure exists for the Sādhaka who recognises everything to be essentially identical with consciousness.[4] Just as when one identifies himself with Garuḍa, one remains unaffected by poison, similarly one who identifies himself with Bhairava remains uneffected by moral and other considerations. Just as one who looks upon a woman with desire, be it even his wife, has already committed adultery, so also one who embraces a woman without desire has not committed any immoral or wrong act.[5] Those who perform the Kaul ritual only for the sake of satisfying the senses are mere animals or *Paśus*. 'He who introduces Paśus into the *cakra* out of love, fear or passion, falls from

1. Pandey, K. C., op. cit. p. 623.
2. Bharati, Agehananda, op. cit. pp. 240-1.
3. T. A. III. 272.
4. अतएव च यत्किञ्चित् संविदैक्यमापन्नं तत् सर्वं शुद्धमिति; तेन संविदैकात्म्या-नैकात्म्याभ्यां सर्वत्र शुद्धयशुद्धिविभाग: । T. A. III. 266.
5. Coomarswamy, *The Dance of Śiva*, p. 146.

the *Kuladharma* and goes to hell, even though he be a *vīra*.'[1] Thus, the Kaulas take great care to prevent the undeserving from entering into the fold of the initiated. Only those who know the true nature of reality are eligible to perform the ritual.

It is not easy to follow the Kula path. It is as dangerous as walking on the sword's edge, or holding a lion by ear or putting the serpent on one's hand[2]. It is meant only for those smaller number of *Sādhakas* who have transcended the sphere of morality and attained a very high level of spirituality[3]. The ritual is performed not for the satisfaction of the senses, but for realizing the Absolute. The Kaula tries to rest in the divine bliss just at the time when he experiences the height of sensual pleasure. The underlying belief is that one may attain the vision of Śakti (*spanda*) if at the rise of an emotion one becomes introvert[4]. *Ānanda*, which is the essential nature of the self, becomes manifest at the beginning and end of sex-union. Hence, the rest on ānanda enables the Sādhaka in realizing his true self[5].

Sex-union has been described as the first sacrifice (*ādi yāga*) in Kaulism. In it the Sādhaka does not remain at the level of sensuality but rises to the sphere of spiritual

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1. स्नेहाद् भयाद् अनुरक्तया पशुं चक्रे प्रवेशयन् ।
कुलधर्मान् परिभ्रष्टो वीरोऽपि नरकं व्रजेत् ॥
Maha Nirvāna Tantra 8th ullas.
2. कृपाणधारागमनाद व्याघ्रकर्णावलम्बनात्
भुजङ्गधारणान्नूनमशक्यं कुलसेवनम् । Kulārṇava II. 123
3. धाराधिरूढ़ेष्विति T. A. III. 296-70. Ibid. 39-40
4. सर्वत्र तावदुपायमार्गे समस्तेतरवृत्तिप्रशमपूर्वमेकाग्रीभवन्ति योगिनः, एतास्वस्तिक्रोधाद्यवस्थासु स्वरसत एव समस्तापरवृत्तिक्षयमयीषु यदि स्पन्दतत्वविविक्तये सततमुद्युक्तो झटित्यन्तर्मुखीभवन्ति योगिनस्तत्समीहितमचिरेणैव लभन्ते । *Spanda Nirṇaya*. p. 39-40,
5. क्षोभाधन्तविरामेषु तदेव च परामृतम् ।
सीत्कार सुखसद्भावसमावेशसमाधिषु ॥ T. A, II. 164-5.
Pandey, op. cit. p. 622,

unity. He alone is true Kaula who does not lose control over his body and mind, but is able to identify himself with the Absolute through the use of wine etc.[1] The Kaula believes that sex can be transformed into a means for spiritual attainments. Specially in India, where social conventions are too rigid, illicit love becomes the very type of salvation. For, "such a love involves a surrender of all that the world values, and sometimes life itself. When Krishna receives the milk maids, and tells them he oweş them a debt that can never be paid, it is because they have come to him like a *Vairāgī* who has renounced his home."[2]

The charge that the Tantrics pretend to be religious only in order to indulge in wine and woman is unfounded. For these things can be easily obtained even in India. Then, where is the necessity of inviting so much abuse ? None has to undergo the excessive hardships, the degree of self-control, the tedium of initiation, of ritualistic perfection, and of minute detail in order to have these things.[3]

The Pratyabhijna

The doctrine of Pratyabhijñā is an important contribution of Kashmir Śaivism to Indian Philosophy. Though Krama and Kaula were prevailing in some form or other in different places in India, Pratyabhijñā is altogether a new concept in Philosophy and Religion. That is why the entire Kashmir Śaivism has often been called *Pratyabhijñā Darśana.*

The Pratyabhijña has also been referred to as the Trika system or as the '*ṣaḍārdhakrama-vijñāna.*'[4] Trika is the highest of all spiritual disciplines. *Anupāya*, which is the characteristic feature of the Trika, is the fourth and the highest means of release. As *śāmbhavopāya* in its highest phase becomes identical with *anupāya*, Kaulism

1. Kulārṇava, V. 70-74.
2. Coomarswami, op. cit. p. 141.
3. Bharati, op. cit.
4. T, A. I. 28-9

merges in the Pratyabhijñā. The differences between them are mostly confined to attitudes and practices. In contrast with Kaulism which involves certain prohibitions, there is perfect freedom to the sādhaka in the *Pratyabhijñā*.[1] Whereas, according to *Kśemarāja*, the followers of the Tantra regard Parama Śiva to be transcendent, and the Kaulas regard it as immanent, those who follow the Trika regard it to be both transcendent and immanent. According to Kśemarāja, while the Tantrics regard Parama Śiva to be transcendent, and the Kaulas regard it to be immanent, the followers of the Trika regards it to be both transcendent and immanent.[2]

The absolutistic Śaivism is based upon Divine revelation contained in the sixty-four monistic Śaiva āgamas. The revelation is supposed to have continued from ages through an unbroken tradition of teachers. In the present age it has been given to humanity by *Durvāsā* through his mind born son *Tryambaka* when the revealed truth was being misinterpreted or misused. Lord Śiva revealed the *Śiva Sūtras* to Vasugupta. The *Śiva Sūtras* provide the main basis for the growth of absolutistic Śaivism.

The literature of the Trika system has been divided in to three stages : the *āgama śāstra*, *spanda śāstra*, *pratyabhijñā śāstra*.[3] The *āgama śāstra* or the revealed truths, constitute the intuitive stage of the system. *Mālinīvijaya*, *svacchanda*, *vijñāna bhairava*, *mṛgendra*, *Rudra yāmal* and *Śiva Sūtra*[4] are the important texts belonging to the āgamic stage.

Many important ideas of the system were developed in the *Spanda Śāstra* period. The *Spandakārikās* further elaborate

1. Ibid III. 286, 288-9
2. विश्वोत्तीर्णमात्मतत्वम्-इति तान्त्रिका: ।
   विश्वमय इति-कुलाद्याम्नायनिविष्टा: ।
   विश्वोत्तीर्णं विश्वमयं च-इति त्रिकादिदर्शनविद: । PH. VIII.
3. Chatterjee. J. C., *Kashmir Shaivism*, pp. 7-40. Also Jaideva, Singh's Introduction to *Pratyabhijñā hṛdayam*, p. 102-3
4. There are the *vrtti* and *vārtika* of Bhāskara and Varadaraj and the Vimarśinī of Ksemaraja on the *Śiva Sūtras*.

the basic principles of the Śiva Sūtras. The *Kārikās*, also called *Sūtras* by Kallata, are known as *saṁgraha grantha* as they are supposed to gather the meaning of the Śiva Sūtras. Kśemarāja holds Vasugupta to be the author of the Spanda Kārikās.[1] The *Vivṛti* of Rāma Kantha, *Pradīpikā* by Utpala Vaiśṇava, *spanda sandoha* and *spanda nirṇaya* by Kśemarāja, are some important commentaries on the Spanda Kārikās.

The Pratyabhijñā Śāstra represents the stage of philosophical systematisation. The texts belonging to this period deal with the concept of *recognition* and the problems connected with it. This stage might be regarded as the central philosophy of the monistic Śaivism of Kashmir.[2] Advaitism, which was more or less implicit in the Sūtra period, was explicitly established by the authors of the Pratyabhijñā period. While Vasugupta propogated the monistic doctrine merely as revelation or as faith, it was Somānanda who laid the philosophical foundation of Śaiva advaitism.[3] In his *Śiva dṛṣṭi* Somānanda provides the ontological and epistemological basis for Śaiva Absolutism The Śaiva view of metaphysics is well conveyed by the term *dṛṣṭi*. According to the Śaivite different metaphysical theories represent different visions or *dṛṣṭis* of reality. Accordingly each system has its own unique vision of reality. Ultimately, however, the absolutistic Śaiva view alone, being integral and perfect, is real. Utpaladeva's commentary on *Śiva dṛṣṭi* and his *Iśvara Pratyabhijñā Kārikās* are also significant works. The Pratyabhijñā texts represent the full maturation of the system which derives the name from these texts. Utpaladeva claims to have summarised the thought of his teacher Somānanda in the Pratyabhijñā Kārikās. The Kārikās and the works relating to them are primarily aimed at establishing the absoluteness of God (*Iśvaradvayavāda*). While facing the opponent on two

1. According to J. C. Chatterjee they were composed most likely by Vasugupta's pupil Kallata. *Kashmir Shaivism*, p. 15
2. 'Philosophy proper of the Trika', Ibid. p. 17.
3. Ibid. pp. 22-3.

fronts, the ātmavāda and anātmavāda, the Pratyabhijñā writers jealously guard the theistic spirit of Śaivism.

Abhinavagupta occupies as important place in the Śaiva tradition as is occupied by Śaṁkara and Nāgārjuna in the Vedānta and Buddhist traditions respectively.[1] He has the reputation of writing many important works on philosophy, religion, art and literature. In his *Vimarśinī* on the Kārikā he tries to bring out the fuller implication of the Kārikās. His *Iśvara Pratyabhijña Vivṛti Vimarśinī* (Bṛihati Vṛtti) is aimed at clearing up those points which could not be clear in the small commentary, *Laghvi Vimarśinī*. In the *Paramārthasāra* he briefly states the essentials of the system[2] Some of his other important works are : *Parātriṁśikā Vivaraṇa*, *Māli ī Vijaya Vārtika*, *Bodha Pañcadaśikā*, *Bhagwadgītārtha Saṁgraha*, *Tantrāloka*, and *Tantrasāra*.

1. For a detailed discussion of Abhinavagupta's life, works and teachings see *Abhinavagupta* by Dr. K. C. Pandey, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Varanasi, 1963.

2 According to Prof. S. S. Sastri this work of Abhinavagupta is derivative and Abhinavagupta has made an honest acknowledgement of its source. See his *Collected Papers*, p. 323.

PART II

TRANSCENDENTAL RECOGNITION

CHAPTER FOUR

TRANSCENDENTAL RECOGNITION

"Having somehow realised my identity with the Supreme and wishing to render service to humanity, I am establishing 'Self-Recognition' which is a means of attaining all that is of value."[1]

1. Transcendental Recognition

Epistemological problems play vital role in the growth and formulation of a philosophical system. Considerations of these problems in Indian philosophy are primarily extensions of metaphysical issues. All philosophising in India originates from the problem of final release. The appropriateness of the methods and kind of reasoning in philosophy depend upon the solution of the generating problem.[2] Prof. Hiriyana holds that Psychology in India never succeeded in getting separated from philosophy. Accordingly each system has its own view of *jñāna* or knowledge which is coloured by its metaphysics.[3]

According to Absolutistic Śaivism the attainment of the highest self is possible only through an investigation of the ultimate source of the knowledge of objects, such as 'blue' and 'pleasure' etc. All objective consciousness ultimately ends in the universal Self.[4] The aim of this system is to help the individual in attaining self-realization. Final release is possible only when the veil of ignorance is

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1. कथंचिदासाद्य महेश्वरस्य
   दास्यं जनस्याप्युपकारमिच्छन् ।
   समस्तसंपत्समवाप्तिहेतुं
   तत्प्रत्यभिज्ञामुपपादयामि ॥ IPV I. I. I.

2. Potter, K., *Presuppositions in Indian Philosophy*, p. 25, 89.
3. Hiriyana, M., *Indian Philosophical Studies*, vol. I, p. 19.
4. *Bhāskarī*, vol., I, pp. 34-9.

removed. Knowledge is significant even in practical life. The practical life of those who have not recognised the essential nature of self is impure ; it is pure in case of those persons who have realized the true self.[1] Entire Śaiva philosophy, including even cosmology, is ultimately intended to lead to the knawledge of the Self.[2]

In order to establish that their theories are universally applicable, followers of different systems generally resort to illustrations from empirical experience. It is intended, through these illustrations, to rule out the objections regarding the incompatibility of the theory with practical life, of *paramārtha* with *vyavahāra*. Besides, such illustrations also provide concrete expression to the essential concepts of a system. That is why only a particular type of illustration gains favour in a particular system. For the central metaphysical standpoint of a system can be expressed or instantiated most clearly and comprehensively through a particular illustration alone. Absolutistic systems, like the Mādhyamika, the Yogācāra and the Vedānta, which are interested in showing the ultimate illusoriness of the world, select and repeatedly appeal to the instances of experience of illusion in practical life. An analysis of illusion helps them in rejecting the practical as illusory and establishing the ultimacy of the Absolute. On the other hand, the Śaiva Absolutists prefer the illustrations from 're-cognitive' experience and find it useful in their attempts to establish the integrality of reality. The absoluteness of the knowing subject (*para pramātā*) is established by them on the analogy of knowledge situation in the case of 'Recognition.'

Recognition is a case of knowing in which the present awareness is somehow brought in relation with the past experience. It is an act of cognition which consists in the unification of past and present experiences. It differs from memory in the sense that while the object of previous experience is absent in the case of memory, it is present

1. IPV I VII. 14.
2. *Bhāskarī*, vol. I, p. 341.

in the case of recognition. Recognition is the knowledge that the object given in the present perception is identical with the object experienced previously. When we identify a person by recollecting his former image, as 'he is the same Caitra,' it is a case of simple recognition.[1] Another case of recognition is that in which a lady recognizes her lover. In this case, let us suppose, the lady falls in love with a man merely on hearing about his excellances, without personally knowing or seeing him. Her beloved happens to pass before her eyes many times and yet she is unable to identify this present image of him with that she has formed after hearing about him. This is a complicated case af recognition. For, while in the former case recognition mostly depends upon memory, in this case recognition cannot be possible unless there is an identification of the two images. The identification is possible only if the veil of ignorance is removed. Recognition would take place when 'somehow' the lady is able to identify the image of the beloved in her mind with the image of the man present before her.

Similarly in the case of recognition of the highest Self there are two images in the mind of the individual. The first is the image of the finite self derived from self-experience; it is the knowledge which every body has of himself. The other image of the self is formed after a serious study and reflection upon the Scripture[2]. Ultimate recognition of the highest Self, which consists in the identification of the two images, depends upon spiritual instruction (dīkśā). However, an identification of the two images is not always dependent upon the word of authority or instruction. Pratyabhijñā is that faculty which enables the individual to attain self-realization without the help of *dīkśā*.[3]

In the ordinary case of recognition the experience takes place in two stages. In the first stage there is an obscura-

1. प्रत्यभिज्ञा च—भातभासमानरुपानुसंधानात्मिका, स एवायं चैत्र—इति प्रतिसंधानेन श्रभिमुखीभूते वस्तुनिष्ठज्ञानम्; IPV. I. I.
2. Bhāskarī, vol, I pp. 36-40
3. Pandey, kc. op. cit. p. 305

tion of the true nature of the object by the veil of ignorance. In the second stage there is the removal of the veil and an identification of the present image of the object with a previous image. The interesting thing about recognition is that before it takes place the object, though present before the perceiver, is not really known or perceived. But it cannot be said that the perceiver does not know the object; he knows the object and yet does not know it fully. Prior to recognition the object is known only partially. In recognition it is known fully. Ignorance is partial knowledge; it is a failure to realize the whole truth. In perfect knowledge the object is known in its completeness. When knowledge takes place, either by way of impartation or through self-efforts, the object is revealed completely. In the final analysis, knowledge becomes possible only due to the synthetic activity of the knowing subject. In the absence of synthetic unity provided by the self, the present image cannot be identified with the previous image. Prior to its recognition the object, say X, was known as something else, say as Y. True knowledge of the object consists in the recognition that Y is really X. It is not knowledge but ignorance to regard it as Y. However, Y is not an illusory appearance superimposed upon the true nature of X; X itself appears as Y, which represents the nature of X incompletely.

All recognitive acts presuppose the synthetic unity of consciousness. Epistemologically it means that all recognition is in fact self-recognition; all knowledge is self-knowledge. The analogy of 'recognition' is extended to all cases of cognition in the Pratyabhijñā system. Accordingly, all cognition is recognition, which is self cognition. Knowledge is in reality nothing but I-consciousness, limited by the affections cast by a variety of manifestations brought about by the subject himself. And the freedom in relation to these manifestations is the freedom of the power of knowledge.[1]

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1. तत्र ज्ञानं नाम स्वयंभेदिताभासभेदोपाश्रयनियन्त्रणासंकुचितम् 'अहमिति' संवेदनम्। तत्राभासेषु यत् स्वातंत्र्यं तदेव ज्ञानशक्तिविषयं स्वातन्त्र्यं संपद्यते इति ॥
Bhāskarī Vol. I P. 399

While remembrance is a form of knowledge which is produced by mental impressions alone, recognition takes place when the object is directly perceived. Cognitive activity becomes successful owing to the recollecting power of the subject. In the absence of the power of recollection no cognition would be possible. But recollection is recalling of some previous experience. It implies twofold experience : some kind of cognising and also its absence in the past. Recollecting and forgetting or cognising and non-cognising might be described as the self-revealing and self-concealing aspects of consciousness. Both of these aspects are manifestations of the power of freedom of the Self.

This means that knowledge is a product of the freedom of consciousness. Knowledge involves some element of ignorance or forgetfulness. All worldly transactions presuppose these two elements. No action or knowledge would take place if everything is known everytime. In pure and absolute knowledge no *vyavahāra* or worldly life would be possible. Some ignorance or forgetting is involved in all knowing or acting. This point is very well illustrated in such phenomena as sport, dance, drama, poetry etc. They are the spontaneous expressions of the freedom of soul. A veil of forgetfulness is thrown over the subject during these creative moments. Creativity, or any other activity, always involves a lapse of the subject into ignorance.

While the Buddhists interpret knowledge in terms of memory, the Vedāntins explain it in terms of perception. Former regards perception to be illusory, the latter holds memory to be illusory. But in reality none is possible without the other. The opposition between these two standpoints is successfully resolved in the philosophy of Pratyabhijñā. In the case of recognition past and present cognitions are involved in the same experience. In it memory and perception both are fused together. It is wrong to accept only one side of the integral experience and make it the absolute.

The recognition in the case of Self is nothing but noticing the powers of the Self. Though every body has some

knowledge of the self, it is not fully realized, as its real nature is obscured by the veil of ignorance[1]. Recognition is the realization of the true nature of Self. It is also described as a way to arouse the consciousness of perfection of self[2]. It is transcendental recognition as it is not a product of finite reasoning. In its essential nature it is revelatory. It consists in the removal of the veil of ignorance and the identification of the individual self as the universal Self. The knowledge of the Lord as possessed of Supreme power, having been got through the well known Purāṇas, Siddhānta, Āgama and Inference etc., and the immediate apprehension of one's own self being always there, recognition arises through the unification of the two experiences in the form : 'certainly I am that very Lord'.[3] As knowledge and ignorance are modes of experience, or manifestations of consciousness, transcendental recognition consists in the realization of the absoluteness of consciousness.

Because of ignorance the individual has never looked upon himself as the Lord, though in reality he is the Lord himself. Through bringing the powers of the self to light the Pratyabhijñā system prompts people to look upon themselves as the Lord.[4] The idea that the individual is identical with the Lord was not in practice, prior to the rise of the Pratyabhijñā system, due to ignorance. 'This Śāstra aims at enabling the people to live this idea in practice by bringing to light His powers of knowledge, will and action by means of treatise on Pratyabhijñā, which is a collection of inferential proofs to justify the idea in practice'.[5] According

1. I. P. V. I. I.
2. Ibid
3. इहापि प्रसिद्धपुराणसिद्धान्तागमानुमानादिविदितपूर्णशक्तिस्वभावे ईश्वर सति स्वात्मन्यभिमुखीभूते तत्प्रतिसंधानेन ज्ञानम् उदेति, नूनं स एव ईश्वरोऽहम्-इति । Bhāskarī, Vol. I PP. 37-8.
4. अप्रवर्तितपूर्वोऽत्र केवलं मूढ़तावशात् ।
शक्तिप्रकाशेनेशादिव्यवहारः प्रवर्त्यते ।। IPV. II. III. 17
5. Ibid

to the Pratyabhijñā doctrine all knowledge or action, whether in Sadāśiva or in a worm, really belongs to the absolute subject. Unless willed by the Absolute, no action or knowledge is possible. *Pramāṇa* also ultimately is nothing but the light of the Self. The very functioning of Pramāṇas depends upon the luminosity of Consciousness (*Saṁvid*). Accordingly Cit Śakti or Saṁvid alone is the real Pramāṇa. In order to manifest multiplicity, Cit Śakti manifests itself in the form of thirty-six categories and becomes the cause of the experience of diversity. The various means of knowledge and the intellect etc. are but different manifesttations of Cit Śakti.[1]

2. Error

Analysis of error proves to be a difficult task for absolute idealism. It is often hard for the absolutist to answer the question : how can error find a place in the absolute ? While the absolutists like Vedāntins, Mādhyamika and Yogācāra begin with the fact of negation or consciousness of illusion[2], the Śaiva absolutists question the very existence of error. There is, according to them, nothing like error or illusion. There is no erroneous or illusory fact ; nor is there any erroneous knowledge of fact. All so called illusory or erroneous knowledge is, in fact, incomplete knowledge.[3]

The problem of erroneous knowledge has been discussed in great detail in Indian Philosophy. Each system attempts to explain it in its own way. No system can afford to ignore this problem. According to the Mādhyamika error is the 'cognition of the non-existent,' *asat khyāti.* Owing to ignorance there is the awareness of the non-existent in

1. *Bhāskarī*, vol. I. pp. 312-13,
2. CPB., pp. 214-7, 322-26.
3. An error is an incomplete thought that to a higher thought is known as having failed in the purpose. We can become conscious of our error only in so far as we are able to identify ourselves with the standpoint of this higher thought, of which we are ourselves a fragment. *Hundred Years of Philosophy*, p. 91-2.

erroneous knowledge. Both terms of an erroneous judgement, the subject as well as the predicate, e.g. the 'this' (rope) and the 'snake' in the judgement 'this is snake,' are false. The Mādhyamika regards the analogical extension of the empirical case of illusion to the whole world by the speculative systems as dogmatic. He starts with the world illusion itself in its directness and universality and is mainly interested in showing the world-illusion in its entirety.[1] As such, he is not interested in empirical illusion at all. He has no theory of illusion, rather for him all theories are illusions.[2]

The Yogācāra Buddhists propound the theory that error consists in regarding that which is internal to consciousness as external to it. It is called *ātmakhyāti*. There is no object outside of consciousness. The objects of cognition are identical with consciousness; they have no existence in themselves. As the object and its consciousness are indistinguishable, the two are identical. Objectivity or independence and externality of the object of knowledge is unreal. The 'thisness' of the snake, in the illustration of the rope-snake, is false; the subjectivity of snake alone is real. The givenness or objectivity is false, since there is nothing given to consciousness.

The Naiyāyikas, on the other hand, hold that error has an objective basis and is not merely negative The snake, in the case of rope-snake illusion, is objectively real and exists somewhere else. Error is, thus, neither a cognition of nothing, nor a case of non-cognition, but a case of cognition of something else, *anyathākhyāti*. The Nyāya theory of error is consistent with its conception of *abhāva* or negation. *Abhāva* is not just nothing; it is the negation of something (*Pratiyogin*) in something else (*anuyogin*). Even in the case of illusory perception there is a direct contact with the real snake. It is, however, an extraordinary contact, *jñāna-lakśaṇa-pratyāsatti*.

1. CPB, p. 216.
2. Chatterjee, A. K., *Yogācāra Idealism*, p. 257.

Being an extreme realist, the Naiyāyika does not agree with the view that a negative judgement is merely privative. Nor does he agree with the view that a negative judgement is merely a wrong way of expressing a positive one. On the otherhand, he holds that like the positive judgements the negative judgements too refer to facts which are negative. Correction of illusion merely cancels the identity or the super-imposed relation between the 'snake' and the 'this.' It does not negate the reality of the snake. An erroneous judgement is more a case of commission than of omision. In it we introduce a relation between the subject and the predicate (between 'this' and 'snake') which is not really there.

The Prabhākara Mimaṁsakas hold that an erroneous judgement is negative. It is a case of non-discrimination of different cognitions and of their respective contents ; it is a case of *akhyāti*. Two distinct cognitions are involved in an illusory experience. The cognition of 'this' is a case of perception, the cognition of 'snake' is recollection. Neither the perceptual experience 'this', nor the recollection of 'snake' is cancelled at the time of correction. It is only the non-distinction between the two distinct cognitions which is rejected. A judgment is erroneous because it does not lead to the desired practical consequences. In reality there is, however, no wrong knowledge. For the real could never be cognised as something other than what it is. Unlike the Yogācāra. the Prabhākaras are realists and refuse to allow human mind the power to create something which does not refer to actual world.

Against the Prabhākaras, Kumārila and his followers emphasize the creativity of mind. According to them, in order to explain satisfactorily the phenomenon of error, it has to be accepted that mind possesses the power of creativity. Absence of discrimination need not give rise to error. A person might be discriminative and yet remain within ignorance. Further, knowledge being self-revelatory every judgement should be confined to itself. But in the case of

erroneous judgement there is supposed to be a confusion between two simple judgements.

Rāmānuja holds that the objects of cognition are real and exist independently of the knowing consciousness. Cognition always refers to some existing object. There is cognition of the existent even in the case of illusory experience, *sat khyāti*. The shell often appears as silver, for the former really contains the latter within it. Similarly, the mirage also contains water in addition to earth and fire. It is owing to some organic defects that we see only a few constituents of the object. In reality there is no error. All distinction between truth and error is made only from the point of view of utility in practical life. Even in the case of erroneous knowledge, there is no subsequent cancellation of the object of experience. All experience is true and all objects of experience are real. According to the principle of quantaplication (*Pañcīkaraṇa*) everything involves every thing (*sarvam sarvātmakam*).

The Advaita Vedāntins hold that error can be explained only on the view that it is a superimposition or *adhyāsa*. According to the exponents of different theories of error the essence of erroneous cognition consists in appearance of one thing as having the characteristics of another. However the exponents of these theories differ with regards to the nature of the locus of illusion. But ultimately all of them fail to explain the nature of illusion. Finally we have to take recourse to the doctrine of *anirvacanīyatā*, the ultimate inexplicability of error. Howsoever we try, it is not possible to determine the true nature of the illusory. It is wholly inexplicable, *anirvacanīya*. It is, rather, of the nature of ignorance (*ajñāna svarūpa*) and is unintelligibility itself. There can be no answer to the questions regarding the how, why, and whence of *avidyā*. These questions arise only within the realm of ignorance. The connection of the illusory with its ground itself is illusory. The relation between the illusory and its ground is a one-sided relation; the former depends upon the latter, but the latter is independent of the former. Nowhere is an illusion found without a ground. But the ground

need not be necessarily related to the illusory, which is superimposed upon it. Though the ground is wholly transcendent it is also vitiated in so far as it appears to be related to the illusory. The question regarding the possibility of illusion cannot be answered. Illusion is a given fact. As there is no conscious process from knowledge to ignorance, there is no conscious fall into illusion. However, the reverse is possible, one can go from ignorance to knowledge. As there can be no beginning of illusion, the Vedāntin is not concerned with showing the possibility of illusion. He is mostly interested in determining the conditions of illusion.

The analysis of illusory experience shows that realization of illusion becomes possible only when it is transcended. One cannot become conscious of illusion as long as one is within it. Illusion is known as illusion only when it is sublated by a subsequent awareness. The illusory is composed of a complex nature. It is not a pure or simple entity; otherwise there would be no scope for its being transcended. It is something which is apparently real in the beginning but unreal in the end. It seems to participate in the nature of reality as well as unreality. But in itself it is neither real nor unreal; for the real cannot be negated, nor can the unreal be experienced as real.[1] It cannot exist in the substratum; neither is it a mere memory image, nor purely subjective; neither is it absolutely non-existent, nor is it real somewhere else. The illusory experience is neither of the nature of perception, nor of memory, nor anything else. It is experience *sui generis*. The view that error is a subjective percept (ātmakhyāti), or that it is a perception of something which exists elsewhere (anyathākhyāti), fails

1. यन्नास्ति तन्नोपलभ्यते यथा शश विषाणादि । Śaṁkara's com. on Tait. Up. II. 6.

According to Bradley it is a realm of not-being which is not fully real and yet which is not nothing. The chief difficulty is that, on the one hand, we cannot accept anything between non-existence and reality, while, on the other hand, error obstinately refuses to be either. *Appearance and Reality*, p. 164.

to explain the element of immediacy in it. To regard the illusory as real is to deny the possibility of error; merely because it appears like a snake, the illusory snake cannot become real. It is something indescribable, *anirvacanīya.* The snake or the silver that appears on the presentation of the rope or the shell is a product of māyā.[1] The alleged incompatibility of the theory of anirvacanīyatā with the law of Excluded Middle should not make us blind to the facts. Experience is not based upon logic; it is logic which is based upon experience.[2] The Vedānta analysis of illusion is from the standpoint of realism. According to it the object of knowledge is independent of the knowing consciousness and is self-evident 'thing-in-itself.'[3] Illusion consists in mistaking the 'given' for the apparent, the 'this' for the snake. While the superimposed snake is unreal, the 'thisness' of it is real.

The analysis of illusion enables the Vedāntin to treat the entire world as illusory and Brahman alone as real. From the illustration of empirical illusion the Vedāntin interprets, analogically, the nature of world-illusion. For instance, in the judgement 'this is snake,' the 'this' corrresponds to Brahman as pure Being, the 'snake' corresponds to the phenomena as superimposed on the Real. Thus, we arrive at the notion of Brahman through an analysis of the knowledge function of the subject. The pure object is unrelated to the act of knowing; it is independent of its being known. The cognition of 'this' as rope or anything else does not affect the being of 'this.' Hence it has to be denied that the 'this' appears as snake. The very appearance of 'this' as snake is itself illusory; the snake is unreal, it never existed. This gives rise to the view that there are degrees of the illusory, *prātibhāṣika* and *Vyāvahārika.* While the Vyāvahārika has empirical stability, the prātibhāṣika does not have even empirical validity. However, ultimately

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1. अतोमायामयम् रजतम् । Pañcapādika, p. 205 (Calcutta ed.)
2. Devaraja, N. K., op. cit. p. 133
3. CPB. p. 215

both of them are equally unreal. They are distinguished merely because the illusory experience or the prātibhāṣika provides a pattern for explaining the empirical or vyāvahārika. The Ultimate reality (Pāramārthika) remains wholly unaffected by these appearances.[1]

But, here the difficulty arises that corresponding to the illustration of an empirical illusion we do not possess the experience of cancellation of the empirical world. There is no justification for an universal application of a particular experience of illusion. From an ordinary case of illusion we cannot jump to the conclusion of universal illusion, unless it is actually experienced by us. Accordingly, the Vedāntin claims to have got this insight from revelation. It is revelation which declares Brahman alone to be real and the world as unreal.[2] The cosmic-illusion is revealed in all its entirety in the transcendental consciousness. The whole of practical life, including the phenomena of knowledge, action, relation, etc., is ultimately illusory. Adhyāsa, or the superimposition of the unreal on the real, is the basis of all empirical life. The consciousness of illusion gives rise to philosophical reflection. Removal of adhyāsa or cosmic illusion is the main aim of Vedānta Philosophy. No knowledge of Brahman is possible without getting rid of this illusion. The analysis of an ordinary case of illusion also provides the pattern for interpreting the world-illusion. Thus, the Vedāntin adopts the procedure; the world is false because it is seen, like shell-silver (*idam jagat mithyā, dṛśyatvāt; śukti-rajatavat*).[3]

The problem of error assumes a great significance in absolutistic Śaivism. Abhinavagupta anticipates the objection that there would be no possibility of error in all the three world if the Śaiva theory of reality and knowledge

1. Chatterjee, A. K., op. cit.
2. CPB. pp. 254-5, 323
3. *The Two Definitions of Brahman in the Advaita*, p. 143.

is accepted.[1] On the Śaiva theory even the shell would be in reality 'silver,' as there is determinate knowledge of it in the form 'this is silver.' If the objects have no essential nature of their own, if everything is fixed by the will of the Lord, how can there be any erroneous knowledge of them ? Moreover, as there can be no error, there would be no possibility of correction or sublation. But this would be directly opposed to the Śaiva view that 'determinate knowledge is that which is not proved to be false at a later stage.'[2]

In answer to these objections Abhinava Gupta states that the cognition of silver is erroneous as there is no silver in reality even when the cognition of silver takes place. There is no agreement between the earlier and the later judgements, 'this is silver' and 'this is not silver,' in respect of their spatial limitation. Error consists in having incomplete knowledge.[3] Error is not absence of knowledge but an imperfect knowledge, *apūrṇakhyāti*. The essential nature of error consists in not shining of the object in as perfect form as it should be.[4] It is possible to talk about error in differeut ways, such as *asatkhyāti*, *viparītakhyāti*, *anirvacanīya khyāti*, etc., only when this basic position is accepted. It is owing to ignorance that different systems accept different theories of error. But according to the learned error is always of the form of imperfect knowledge.[5]

This view, that error is actually a part of truth, in the sense that its correction is not a matter of cancellation but

1. ननु विमर्शलादेव यदि वस्तुनां भेदाभेदव्यवस्था तर्हि इदानीं, त्रिजगति निवृता भ्रान्तिसंकथा:, शुक्तिकायामपि सत्यरजततैव आपतति 'इदं रजतम्' इति विमृश्यमानत्वात्, ततश्च भ्रान्त्यभावे बाधानुपपत्ते: किमर्थमुक्तं 'मितिर्वस्तुन्यबाधिता:' इति । IPV, II. 3. 13.
2. IPK. II. III. 2
3. अपूर्णं ज्ञानरूपा न तु ख्यात्यभावरूपा,... । Bhāskarī, p. 123.
4. ततो यावता पूर्णेन रूपेण प्रख्यातव्यं विमर्शपर्यन्तं तावत् न प्रख्याति इत्यपूर्णख्यातिरूपा अख्यातिरेव भ्रान्तितत्वम् । IPV. Ibid.
5. अत्र वादिनो भ्रान्ते: ख्यातिपंचकरूपत्वं पृथक् पृथक् कथयन्ति ।
......सुशिक्षित मते तु अपूर्ण ख्यातिरूपा अख्याति: ।
Bhaskarī, vol. I. p. 123-4.

of supplementation, is essential to the absolutist's position.[1] No consistent absolutism can regard error as ultimately indefinable. Nor can it be accepted that error is 'something' which obstinately refuses to be included in the absolute experience. For the Absolute being, by definition, the 'All,' no part of experience can be outside of it. Hence 'the piece of experience which we call erroneous must therefore be accepted completely by the Absolute without subtraction of one jot or one title. The transformation of the erroneous in the Absolute does not mean its subtraction or sublation but its fulfilment or a transformation by addition.[2]

There is no error in itself. Partial or limited knowledge is regarded as error only with reference to complete knowledge.[3] In the case of erroneous knowledge, 'This is silver', there is no error as far as the various ābhāsas or appearances, such as 'this', 'silver' and their relationship, are concerned. Error arises when there is determinate knowledge : 'this is not the thing called silver, which is hard and is capable of being perceived as such by other perceivers and of serving its purpose'. In this case the earlier cognition is sublated by the later cognition 'this is not silver'. However, there is no error, nor cancellation, so far as the separate consciousness of 'this' etc. is concerned. The latter cognition (*bādhaka*) merely destroys the continuity of the determinate knowledge regarding the unification of various ābhāsas. Thus, error consists only in the unification of ābhāsas.

Here, an objection might be raised that on the Śaiva theory of error even the cognition of real silver, being imperfect knowledge, would be erroneous. Thus all knowledge would equally be erroneous in nature and there would be no

1. Cleobury, op. cit., pp. 107-117.
2. Ibid.
3. Cleobury holds that the distinction between partial and complete truth is at the heart of the Theory of truth and error. The only epistemologically significant distinction underlying the logical distinction is that of lesser or greater, vaguer or more accurate, knowledge. Op. cit.

distinction between knowledge and error.[1] But that would be the most welcome conclusion according to the Śaiva Absolutists. If the opponent accepts this view, he may very well understand the nature of reality. For it is certainly true that whatever appears in the sphere of māyā is a mere ābhāsa or appearance. Ultimately, from the point of view of Absolute, it is erroneous. But that which appears as erroneous even in the sphere of māyā is an error upon error, or illusion within illusion; it is like a dream within a dream or a boil on the cheek. In this case there is a break in the continuity of that determinate cognition whose continuity should not have been broken in the empirical sphere. Although the shell silver appears as real silver, yet there is no real existence of silver in the shell, as it is proved in the later cognition : 'this is not silver'. This is so because the ābhāsas of 'this' and 'silver' do not appear to be so related as they did in the previous experience. The place or the locus which gave rise to the ābhāsa of silver in the erroneous cognition does not do so in the subsequent experience.[2]

It might be held that, unlike the erroneous perception of shell silver, there is no mixing up of ābhāsas in the case of erroneous perception of 'two moons', as expressed in the judgement 'there are two moons.' How, then may error or contradiction be possible in this case ? According to the *Pūrṇatākhyātivādins* themselves there can be no error in the case of each separate ābhāsa. In reply to this, the Śaiva Absolutists point out that there is no ground to believe that the ābhāsa of 'two moons' is a simple ābhāsa, not mixed up with any other ābhāsa. Otherwise, if it were without any specific characteristic, how could it appear with disinctive characteristic of being limited by certain time and place ?[3]

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1. भासमानं समस्तं वस्तुजातं शुक्तिकारूप्यन्यायेन भ्रान्तिर्भवति ।
Bhāskarī, op. cit.
2. Bhāskarī, vol. II, p. 125-6.
3. नन्वेवं भवतु शुक्तिकारजते, द्विचन्द्रज्ञाने तु 'द्वौ चन्द्रौ' इत्याभासे शुक्तिकयेव मेलनं न केनाचित्साकमाभासते यत्र बाधःस्यात्, एकाभासांशे च न बाधः, इत्युक्त भवतैव । क एतदाह-मेलनं न केनचित्सह इति । एवं हि सति स्वालक्षण्येन नियतदेशकालतया कथमाभासः ? Ibid. p. 127.

Hence we have to admit that in the case of cognition of 'two moons' also there is ābhāsa of mixing up with time and place.[1] It appears as associated with the ābhāsa of time as there is a sense of distinction between the 'previous' and the 'later' experience. Without association with 'time' there could be no correction of the previous determinate knowledge In fact, *Vimarśa* or thought does not operate on a single ābhāsa, which is unmixed with the ābhāsa of time and place. Further, in the cognition of 'two moons' there is unification of the ābhāsa of place, viz. sky, as is clear from the later cognition : 'the sky, which was seen as occupied by two moons, is not so.' That is how, through this opposite cognition, the former erroneous cognition is removed.

The Śaiva and Śūnya Absolutisms represent two extreme standpoints regarding the erroneous. While the Vedāntins and the Yogācāra assert or deny only one of the two terms of an illusory judgement, the Śaivites affirm, and the Śūnyavādins negate, both the terms. In the Śaiva view both 'this' and 'silver' are real as ābhāsas.

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1. तदेतदं ग्राह—द्विरूपे चन्द्रेऽपि, न केवलं रजत एव। 'नभः' इति देश विशेषः कश्चित्। 'अन्यथा' इति द्विचन्द्रावरुद्धो योविमृष्टः स न तथा, –इति बाधकेन उन्मूलितप्राच्यविमर्शानुवृत्तिकः क्रियते-इति। Ibid.

CHAPTER FIVE

NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE

"We bow to that Śiva, who always illumines by his power of knowledge, the lamp, the multiplicity of objects, which lie merged within Himself, the great cave."[1]

"We bow to that Śiva, on whom the means of right knowledge depend, through dependence on the power of self, in producing the knowledge of the object."[2]

1. Nature of Knowledge

While dealing with the problem of knowledge, the essential nature of the self has also been discussed by the Śaiva Absolutists mainly to prove that the phenomena of knowledge are nothing but the powers of Self. But, as powers cannot exist independently, therefore, the Śaivite further tries to show that the substratum of these powers is really one. This substratum cannot be inert like fire, which is the substratum of the powers of burning and cooking. In the final analysis, it is the Highest Lord who alone is the ultimate substratum of all these powers.[3] Owing to its nature as *Prakāśa Vimarśa*, the self is capable of having knowledge. In its Prakāśa aspect it is pure substratum of psychical images which are merely its modes or forms. In its Vimarśa aspect, the self is capable of

1. महागुहान्तर्निमग्नभावजातप्रकाशक: ।
ज्ञानशक्तिप्रदीपेन य: सदा तं स्तुभ: शिवम् ॥ IPV. I. V. Intr.
2. प्रमाणानि प्रमावेशे स्वबलाक्रमणक्रमात् ।
यस्य वक्त्रावलोकीनि प्रमेये तं स्तुम: शिवम् ॥ IPV. II. III. Intr.
3. यत्तु अत्र प्रमातुरपि स्वरूपं उन्मीलितं तत्तासामेव शक्तित्वं समर्थयितुम्, न हि स्वतन्त्रं शक्तिस्वरूपं भवितुमर्हति इति । अधुना तु तासां शक्तीनां एक आश्रय:, स च तच्छक्तिसंयोजनवियोजनादिस्वाच्छन्घयोगात् महेश्वर: न तु जडस्वरूपवह्न्यादिवत् दाहकपाचकादिशक्त्याश्रयमात्रम् । Bhāskarī, vol. I. p. 346.

knowing itself in different states and forms, such as unity, unity-in-multiplicity and multiplicity.

The Śaiva Absolutist attempts to establish, against the Buddhist and the Vedāntin, the necessity of admitting the 'transcendental unity of consciousness.' The Buddhist and the Vedāntin both fail to account for this unity of consciousness. The Buddhist, because of his rejection of the permanent subject, finds himself unable to explain the phenomena of knowledge. In the absence of a permanent principle, or self-luminous consciousness, which serves as the background of varying determinate cognitions, there would be no possibility of knowledge. There would be no *vimarśa* without *prakāśa*. Similarly, the Vedāntin also finds it difficult to explain the fact of knowledge. His failure is mostly because of his refusal to admit consciousness as self-illuminating or self-differentiating. If it were devoid of vimarśa, prakāśa in itself cannot reflect or illumine anything. Not only that, without vimarśa prakāśa cannot be regarded as self-luminous; it would be like inert matter.

Moreover, because of their dogmatic refusal to accept either Prakāśa or Vimarśa, these systems also fail to explain the phenomenon of memory on which depends the entire practical life. For instance, even the most primordial perceptual experience would not be possible unless there is an unification of the previous and later states of experience.[1] Thus, no human transactions would be possible in the absence of memory. Nor can the practical life be discarded even if the opponents wish so. Accordingly, as these human transactions are really possible, efforts should be made to explain their possibility. But no body, not even the almighty creator, can do it successfully unless the self is admitted to be of the nature of Prakāśa Vimarśa.[2]

1. स्मरण निबन्धना: सर्वे व्यवहारा:। प्रथमपि हि प्रत्यक्षंज्ञानं अहमिति पूर्वापररुपानुसंधानेन स्मरणानुप्राणितेन विनानघटते, प्रमातरि विश्रान्त्यभावात् अप्रत्यक्षत्वप्रसङ्गात् । IPV, I. III. 6.

2. न च 'ध्वंसन्ताम्' इति भवदभोष्टशापमात्रात् ते ध्वंसन्ते, प्रकाशन्ते यत: तत् एतत् आपद्यते-एतदेव समर्थयितुं उद्यन्तव्यम्-इति । तच्च अस्मदभिमत प्रकारेण बिना बिधेरपि अशक्यसमर्थनम् । Bhāskarī, vol. I. p. 38-9.

The light of consciousness which is affected, like a mirror, by the reflection of spatio-temporal order, characterised by simultaneity or succession of objects, is self-luminous and manifest to all. This very light of consciousness is the great Lord, whose essential nature is pure and absolute consciousness. He is called the subject in as much as He is pure light of self-consciousness. He is full of the power of freedom, which expresses itself in various ways, such as unifying, differentiating and relating to the subject the mass of knowledge, consisting of de*t*erminate knowledge in innumerable forms. Thus, the correct description of the light of consciousness is that it is the 'I.' the resting place of the indeterminate and determinate cognitions.[1]

In other words, knowledge is nothing but self-consciousness being affected by the variety of manifestations brought about by the subject himself. And freedom in relation to these manifestations is freedom of power of knowledge. Power of knowledge is essentially the light of consciousness, and action is nothing but *Vimarśa* which is essentially freedom and has its being in *Prakāśa*. Freedom is the essence of light of consciousness. The powers of knowledge and action, therefore, at the transcendental level, are nothing more than free will. At the intermediate level, *parāparā avasthā*, these powers are identicel with I—consciousness, which is identical with 'this—consciousness.' At the lowest level, or the level.of māyā i.e. *aparā avasthā*, they are dominated by thisness. Hence, in every way the power of knowledge is essentially free will or Vimarśa; for without Vimarśa knowledge would not be knowledge but insentiency.[2]

1. I P V I. VII.

2. स एव हि ग्रहंभावात्मा विमर्शो देवस्य क्रीडादिमयस्य शुद्धे पारमार्थिक्यौ ज्ञान क्रिये, प्रकाशरूपतां ज्ञानं तत्रैव स्वातन्त्र्यात्मा विमर्शः क्रिया, विमर्शश्च अन्तःकृत प्रकाशः ······। सर्वथा तु विमर्श एव ज्ञानं तेन विना हि जडभावोऽस्य स्यात्······। Bhāskarī, Vol. I. P. 423

All knowledge, including even the erroneous knowledge, is in reality nothing but the power of freedom of the subject (*Pramātā*). And ultimately all knowership belongs to the absolute non-dual subject. *para pramātā*. He is the real knower in all acts of knowing, the ultimate subject of every judgement. It is obvious that no knowing is possible unless the subject participates in it. But the subject also cannot participate if it is subject to change at every moment, i. e. if it is essentially transitory in nature. Hence it has to be admitted that consciousness is ever self-identical. When it makes some objects manifest, this power of manifestation is called the power of knowledge[1]. Knowledge is the union of subjective and objective waves of consciousness. It is also called *anubhava*. which implies the subject becoming what the object is[2].

2. Determinate and Indeterminate Knowledge.

That knowledge which is not characterised by genus or which does not have any specification or attribution of time, place, form, etc., in common with anything else is called indeterminate knowledge. It consists in the consciousness of an object, at the instance of its first illumination, without involving the use of words. It is only when this immediate illumination takes place that the process of determination begins with the selection by the mind of some points out of the 'mass' reflected on Buddhi. This can be compared to the activity of carving an image out of a piece of stone.[3]

The determinate knowledge is not directly related with the object and is purely internal to the subject. It is also different from the sensation which precedes it. It wholly depends upon the use of words and is produced by the pramāṇas. It refers to each *ābhāsa*, which is a universal, separasely.[4] Even in the case of determinate cognition 'this' there is implied universal 'thisness', which is

1. IPV I. III 7
2. Pandey, KC. op. cit., P. 412
3. Ibid P. 409
4. IPV. II. III. 1-2

present in all objects.[2] In contrast with erroneous knowledge, there is continuity in the case of determinate knowledge. It is not destroyed till it serves its desired purpose. If it is destroyed in the middle, without serving its well known purpose, it would not be determinate knowledge. That is why the erroneous knowledge of 'two moons' cannot be called determinate knowledge.

All determinate knowledge is found invariably to be dependent upon the self Whether the form of determinate cognition be 'I see this' or 'this is jar', it implies that the indeterminate cognition rests on the subject as one with it.[3] At the time when it arises, the indeterminate cognition is self-luminous and essentially one with self (aham). Similarly, the determinate cognition also, being self-luminous, is dependent upon the Self. Determinate cognition which follows the indeterminate takes place in two ways. When the activity of indeterminate knowledge, relating to some perceptual experience of the moment, appears to be the objeet of determinate knowledge, it takes the form : 'I see this'. But it may also assume the form, viz., 'this is jar', without involving the use of the personal pronoun 'I'.

Determinate consciousness is present even in the case of indeterminate experience. Otherwise, in the absence of all determination, there would be no possibility of activity such as running etc. If there is no association with inner speech, which is the essential characteristic of the self and which is similar to indication by figure etc., how can it be possible for a child to attain knowledge regarding an activity which he sees for the first time ? On hearing the words, spoken by another person, the child becomes aware that a particular word has a particular meaning. For instance, when hearing the words : 'bring the jar,' how is it that the child comes to know that the words 'bring' and 'jar' each have a fixed meaning. For, the consciousness that this particular

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1. अध्यवसायस्य अस्मदुक्तनयेन शब्दप्राणितस्य प्रत्याभासं विश्रान्तौ तदपेक्षमपि प्रामाण्यं वदता प्रत्याभासनिष्ठमेव प्रामाण्यमुपेत्यम्,'' । Ibid.

2. IPV. I. IV. 7

meaning presupposes determinate cognitive activity. Thus it is clear that all indeterminate experience involves some element of determination.

Ultimately indeterminate consciousness ends in the determinate awareness, such as 'I see.' Even if it be supposed to be momentary, all indeterminate consciousness involves determination. Otherwise, a person who goes hurriedly with some aim, or utters letters, or reads a book of hymns, loudly, should not really be able to do so. A person cannot reach his desired place unless there is determinate consciousness, which involves the activity of unification, such as the knowledge of the place, the desire to step, stepping, the consciousness of the foot having been placed on the right place, the desire to leave the place, consciousness of another place, the desire to step on it, and so on. Similar is the case with rapid speaking and reading etc. In the case of reading or speaking there is the contact of tongue with various places of articulation. Here hurry consists in the absence of clear determinate knowledge which follows the indeterminate. But in reality there must be the subtle determinate consciousness, consisting of subtle idea of indicatory sign or word. For gross or explicit determinacy is nothing but the expansion into clear and definite shape of the subtle idea in the form of words.

3. Pramana

In order to justify his view that the empirical knowledge is not erroneous the Śaiva Absolutist discusses the real nature of the well known means of right knowledge (*Pramāṇa*) and their effect (*Pramiti*). It is essential to bring out the distinctive nature of means of right knowledge as it is a commonly accepted principle among the philosophers that the existence of a thing can be established only by means of right knowledge. Ultimately everything depends upon the relation between the knower and known.[1]

The means of right knowledge is that because of whose powers the object shines determinately as 'this' and of such

1. IPV, II. III. Intr.

and such 'nature.' It is due to the power of *Pramāṇas* that the objects of knowledge, such as 'blue,' 'pleasure,' etc., shine within the bounds of their limitation. Thus, that because of which the objects are positively ascertained as 'this' in respect of their form and as 'of this nature' in respect of their association with other qualities, such as eternality and transitoriness, is called the means of right knowledge in the world.[1]

Pramāṇa is self-luminous and rises afresh at every moment. According to the Śaiva Absolutism an object does not shine, with its essential characteristics, by itself, as separate from others. It is so because, being insentient, the object cannot illumine itself. Moreover, if it could illumine itself, such consciousness as 'it is manifest to me' would be impossible. Hence it has to be admitted that its luminosity depends upon something else. But this 'something else,' upon which the luminosity of the object depends, cannot be regarded as insentient ; for that would be a case of 'blind leading the blind.' Therefore, that which illumines the object has necessarily to be of the nature of consciousness (Saṁvid). But it cannot be of the nature of pure consciousness as, in that case, it would not be the cause of determinate shining of 'blue' alone; for it is the same with regard to 'yellow' etc. Therefore it has to be assumed that in its essential nature consciousness faces the 'blue,' is affected by it and shines as so affected, at the time of determinate knowledge.

If the 'blue' is not separate from consciousness, then the 'yellow' also, being one with consciousness, should be illumined at the same time. Hence it has to be admitted that the 'blue' shines as separate from consciousness. But its shining as a separate object (*ābhāsa*) is possible only if the subjective light which illumines it be separate from the great Light (*Mahā Prakāśa*). For, if it were not separate from the great Light, it cannot shine as separate from blue etc. as their illuminator. However, the fact is that nothing in the objective realm can bear separation from the great

1. Ibid, II. III.

Light. Therefore it has to be assumed that the Light manifests itself as limited. Thus, in reality the shining of the subject, the means of knowledge and the object is ultimately due to creative power of the great Light. In the final analysis Saṁvid or citi alone is the *Pramāṇa*. All Pramāṇas, being dependent upon the Self, really depend upon Śiva in producing the knowledge of the object.[1]

At every successive moment Pramāṇa, the extrovert subjective *ābhāśa*, has to be manifested afresh as different from that of the preceding moment in order to be able to receive the affection of new objects (*abhinavodaya*). For the light which is supposed to be the means of right knowledge emanates from the limited subject who is always naturally inclined towards the object. The objects are also being affected, at every successive moment, by the new limiting conditions of time, place and form and thus appear new at every moment. If Pramāṇa be not related to the limiting subject, the consciousness : 'I who had consciousness of blue (*nīla*), am now having the consciousness of yellow (pita)' would not be possible. But such consciousness is an undeniable fact of experience. Thus, Pramāṇa is the *ābhāsa* or extrovert light which shines as related to the limited subject and appears every moment in a new form and operates to bring about cognition.

What is the relationship between the Pramāṇa and the object of valid knowledge engendered by it (*pramiti*) ? If it is said that the same ābhāsa which is essentially the light of consciousness is '*miti*' or the fruit of Pramāṇa, then it would amount to making the two synonymous. But, in fact, they are supposed to be related with each other as cause and effect. To this objection, the Śaiva Absolutist holds that the same ābhāsa is Pramāṇa in as much as it is extrovert light. But the same light becomes the effect when, being characterised by introvertness, it is limited by the affections of the objective world. For example, in the case of knowledge : 'That I who am brave, am

1. Ibid.

victorious,' though bravery and victoriousness are supposed to belong to one and the same person, yet they are discriminated as cause and effect in the critical judgement 'because I am brave, therefore I am victorious.' Similarly, there is the relation of cause and effect between Pramāṇa and its resulting knowledge. Though Pramāṇa and Pramiti are essentially the same, yet it might be held that because there is light or manifestation of the 'blue,' therefore there is determinate knowledge 'there is blue.' Moreover the effect of Pramāṇa is no other than the activity of the subject ; and as action has no separate existence apart from the agent and the means, therefore there is no difference between the Pramāṇa and its effect.

The chief characteristic of Pramāṇa is its power to produce the determinate knowledge, which essentially consists in the use of words. But a particular word is used only for a particular manifestation (ābhāsa), which is free from association with other ābhāsas, such as time, place etc. Hence the Pramāṇa operates only on an isolated ābhāsa, which is an universal in itself. Even the word 'this' refers merely to the manifestation that is in front of the subject and is not associated with any other ābhāsa.

Pramāṇa might be described as that means of right knowledge which is not proved to be false later on by an experience of opposite nature. It is the cause of the production of determinate knowledge which continues till the accomplishment of its fixed purpose. It is related to the object and springs from the essential nature of the subject. It is essentially the light of consciousncss. Ultimately *Saṁvid* or *Citi* is the only Pramāṇa. All Pramāṇas being dependent upon the self depend, in the final analysis, upon Śiva, the Absolute consciousness, iñ producing the knowledge of the object. The efficacy of Pramāṇas, consists merely in removing the veil of ignorance. But in reality both ignorance and the removal of it are manifestations of absolute consciousness. Hence, the Śaivite holds *Citi* to be the only Pramāṇa. In order to manifest diversity, Light manifests itself as Kalā, Vidyā, etc.,

and thereby becomes the cause of the experience of diversity. The various means of right knowledge and the intellect. etc. are nothing but different manifestations of the activity of *Cit Śakti*.[1]

The Buddhist definition of Pramāṇa as that which is not subsequently contradicted only amounts to saying that it is a prompter towards the object, or a helper in reaching the object, or it shows the object which can be reached and can be acted upon. But is does not state any positive characteristic of Pramāṇa, which rests on the light of consciousness, which alone is admitted to be the Pramāṇa. Such positive characteristic is established, if at all it can be, only in the case of Śaiva definition of Pramāṇa. Any other definition would be a mockery.[2] The detailed discussion of the nature of Pramāṇa is ignored in the Śaiva system. For, according to it, when the general definition is understood, the essential nature also is, thereby, grasped. Hence, the special definition, etc. are quite useless.

Perception

The Śaiva Absolutist criticises the Sāṁkhya theory of Perception. The Sāṁkhya holds the view that Puruṣa cannot be the illuminator of the object. He puts forth the *Buddhi Vṛtti* theory of knowledge, according to which knowledge is nothing but a form assumed by Buddhi or intelligence. Buddhi is the meeting place of the internal luminosity of consciousness and of the reflection of the external object.[3] But, on the analogy of mirror and its reflection, it is necessary that both the reflecting medium and the object reflected should have an identical nature. On the

1. IPV I. VI. 4-5.
2. ...यस्तु अविसंवादकत्वं तस्य लक्षणं आह तेनापि 'प्रापकत्वं प्रवर्तकत्वं प्रवृत्तियोग्यशक्यप्राप्तिकवस्तूपदेशकत्वं' प्रमाणलक्षणं ब्रुवता न किंचित् प्रमाणाभिमतबोधविश्रान्तं स्वरुपं उक्तम्, तच्च अनेनैव लक्षणेन निर्वाह्यते तत् निर्व्यूढं भवति, अन्यथा मुखभङ्गमूर्धकम्पाङ्गुलीमोटनादिमात्रतत्वं तत्...। Bhāskarī, vol. II, p. 90-91.
3. Pandey, K. C., op. cit, p. 391, 93.

other hand, Buddhi and Self are fundamentally opposed in nature. Moreover, because of its having the power of reflection, either Buddhi is self-illuminating or it is illumined by another. On the first alternative, i.e. if Buddhi itself is self-illuminating, there is no need of postulating the existence of Puruṣa in addition to Buddhi. On the second alternative, if Buddhi is not self-illuminating, it follows that it is really the *Puruṣa* who illumines the object.

The Sautrantika is wrong in holding that the objects are not given in perception but are only inferred. For, if the object is never known in perception, then in no way can the existence of the external object be established through inference. The external object is so called only because it has been directly perceived. Similarly the Vijñānavādin also, who admits the chain or stream of momentary self-consciousness, which is different in case of different individuals, fails to explain the true nature of perceptual knowledge. According to him the *vāsanā* or the capacity to give rise to various presentments is also momentary like the stream of consciousness. The capacity to give rise to certain presentment is supposed to be due to the maturation of a link of the chain of vāsanās. But here the question arises as to how can there be some appearance without something to appear ? And if vāsanā itself is regarded as a thing then it amounts to abandoning the theory that *vijñāna* alone is real.

The fact is that the phenomena of perceptual experience cannot be explained satisfactorily on any theory which creates a gulf between the subject and the object. For, knowledge is nothing but a function of the will power of universal consciousness (*Saṁvid*). This (*Saṁvid*) at the time of each cognition manifests the subject, the object and the means of knowledge. This manifestation can be compared to the creation of a Yogin. The object is not self-luminous ; it is the subject which illumines the object. An image of the object is formed on the mirror of Buddhi by the light which is reflected back from the object. Buddhi is like a

mirror which receives the reflection of the external object and is nothing but a state of limited self. Thus perceptual knowledge takes place when the light, which proceeds from the self towards the object, is reflected back in the intellect in the form of an image. This activity of external projection and internal reflection arises anew at every moment. Perception involves many acts and all of them are taken to be one as they lead to one result, viz. the judgement. The various perceptions which take place within a particular perceptual experience, which prompts the perceiver to some kind of activity, are not generally known or conceived separately.

The Vedānta theory of perception, however, is object-oriented. In perception the mind, while approaching the object, merely expands itself and seizes the whole object all at once. The mind does not form the percept of an object by constructing the piecemeal sensation into a whole. The modification of the mind destroys the veil of ignorance which covers the object. This, however, becomes possible because the transparent mental modification is already fused with consciousness. Thus, destroying the veil of ignorance, the mind reveals the object.

According to the Śaivite, inference, like perception, is also dependent upon the light of the Self. Inference is the knowledge of an ābhāsa, which is of the nature of an effect, with the help of an other ābhāsa, which is of the nature of a cause, or of which the ābhāsa inferred forms the essential nature. However, inference is confined to the spatio-temporal limits within which the invariable concomitance (*Vyāpti*) is established. Ultimately all relations, whether of cause and effect or of identity, are dependent upon the power of arrangement (*Niyati Śakti*) of the Lord.[1]

1, अनुमानजा तु प्रतीति: आभासान्तरात् कार्यरूपात् स्वभावभूतात् वा आभासान्तरे प्रतिपत्ति:, वस्त्वन्तरस्य च तेन साकं कार्यकारणभावनियम: सामानाधिकरण्यनियमश्च ईश्वरनियतिशक्त्युपजोवन एव अवधार्यो भवति न अन्यथा । Bhāskarī, vol. II, p. 85.

Agama

Āgama or Scripture is the natural internal activity, or the transcendental speech or inner voice of the Lord. It might be described as the spontaneous thought of one who rises to the transcendental level of pure absoluteness, expressed at the empirical level. It arises from the pure and highest self and is the very life of the other means of knowledge. For example, the *mantra* 'this posion cannot kill me, I am myself Garuda' frees a person from the effect of snake-bite only if the person who uses it rises above the empirical level and contemplates exclusively on its meaning. For, a person really becomes what he seriously contemplates.[1] Hence āgama is the strongest determinate thought of the absolute self, at the transcendental level. The collection of such thought in language is secondarily called so, as it is a means of arousing such thought.[2] And any collection of such thought in language, which is helpful in arousing such thought in the believer, is also a valid Pramāṇa, e.g. the Vedas, the Siddhānta and the Buddhist and the Jain Āgamas. For the assertions made in these different āgamas, such as, 'I who have performed Jyotistoma shall go to heaven,' 'I am initiated, I shall not be reborn,' 'I am compassionate, I shall attain the State of Buddha,' 'I endure great pain, I shall reach the State of *arhat*,' are really never proved to be invalid ; because only those who believe in them are entitled to follow them. They are invalid only to those who do not believe in them. They fail to arouse strongest determinate thought in those persons who do not have unshakable faith in them.

But it follows, from the above analysis, that one and the same scripture is valid (Pramāṇa) to some persons and invalid to others. And if so, does it not contradict the general principle that the Pramāṇas know no partiality ? To this, the Śaiva Absolutists hold that his view does not

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1. आत्मानम् याद्दसं योत्र भाव्यते ताद्दशो ह्यसौ ।
2. IPV. II, III, 2.

really destroy the universality of the pramāṇas. The statement, 'The pramāṇas know no partiality,' does not mean that what is known by one man is equally known to all men. It does not mean, for example, that the perception of 'blue' on the part of one man makes the blue perceived by all men, nor does the perception of 'smoke' similarly make all persons infer fire from it, nor does the āgama in the form of the prediction by a Siddha, viz. 'In the morning you will get treasure in this way,' become a pramāṇa to all persons alike. Thus it is clear that, in all such cases, a pramāṇa is valid only to a particular man at a particular time and place. Hence there is no harm in the position that the strongest determinate thought is the āgama.[1]

The same āgama, e.g. the Veda, which asserts the non-validity of some portions, such as those regarding jyotistoma etc, in the case of the unqualified person (such as *Śūdra*), asserts the validity of the same portions in the case of a qualified *Brāhmin*. For, in the former case, these portions do not arouse the strongest determinate thought in the unqualified Śūdra, because they are not the articles of unshakable faith to them, and hence are not of the nature of true āgamas for them. But they are of the nature of true āgamas in the case of a Brāhmin as they are the articles of unshakable faith and arouse the strongest determinate thought in him. Thus these āgamas cannot be criticised for being partial to some and impartial to others. All āgamas, whether they are of the nature of injunction or of prohibition, are productive of strong determinate thought only within limitation, i e. only in those persons who are qualified to follow them. Tradition, time, place etc. are significant factors in āgama. Great teachers like Bhartṛhari and others have rightly emphasised that direct perception and āgama invalidate the inference.[2]

The Vedāntins hold that all pramāṇas, including perception, inference and scripture, deal only with the pro-

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.

duct of avidyā, and not with reality. Yet, though belonging to the realm of avidyā, the pramāṇas may also produce knowledge of reality, just as the conventional symbols consisting of lines, letters etc. produce the knowledge of real sounds and words.

In the Vedānta epistemology, knowledge is always of the given and is dependent upon the thing itself (vastu tantram hi jñānam). The being of the object does not depend upon its being known ; on the other hand, it is the being of the object which makes knowledge possible. Anything which does not exist in itself but which exists only through being known is a mere appearance, like the rope-snake. Hence, ultimately all empirical knowing is a form of error ; all perception is misperception. Reality is wholly and completely opposed in nature to what is perceived.[1] The relative character of empirical knowledge is sufficient to establish its illusoriness. Empirical knowledge itself points out its own falsity. It is well known that perception is denied by perception, perception by inference and inference by authority. Moreover, as the real is beyond all distinctions, the empirical knowledge, which implies a distinction of knower, known and knowing, is a product of avidyā.[2] Knowledge is not possible without the amalgamation of the subject with object, both of which are as opposed in nature as light and darkness. This confusion of the two is the most striking example of *adhyāsa* or superimposition, whereby we attribute activity, agency, enjoyment etc. to the witness consciousness. The transfer of the qualities of the object to the subject, and similarly of the subject to the object, is logically false. Yet in mankind this tendency has become natural.[3] The real self cannot be an object of knowledge ; nor can it be subject and object both. Ultimately, the problem as to how the object is related to the subject remains inexplicable.[4]

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1. Malkani, G., *Vedānta Epistemology*, p. 14.
2. Śaṁkara's commentary on MK. IV. 67.
3. SB I. III. 2.
4. *Advaita Siddhi*, pp, 453-4.

According to the Vedāntins the attempt to define knowledge in terms of quality or power is open to serious objection. Knowledge is better known than the hypothetical entity 'quality.' Nor is it necessary to posit a conscious seer as different from consciousness. For consciousness constitutes the very being of the seer. Nor can knowledge be regarded as an activity ; for this would also lead to skepticism, as no knowledge of the object would be possible on this view. In fact, knowledge is nothing but illumination or the principle of revelation which informs, and is implicit in, all experience. In itself knowledge is indefinable.[1]

Knowledge which arises and disappears, or that which is subject to change, is not pure knowledge. Knowledge which changes is the mode of the internal organ informed by the pure knowledge, and constitutes the changing element in our experience. There are two sights, the eternal and unseen, viz. the sight of the seer (sākṣī jñāna), and the non-eternal and the seen (vṛiti jñāna). It is the seer who sees the evanascent sight.[2]

Knowledge is the test of reality in the Vedānta. The distinction between real and unreal depends upon knowledge. That alone is real whose knowledge is not proved false ; on the other hand, the unreal is the object of knowledge which is proved to be false.[3]

4. Triad of Powers

We have seen that the phenomenon of knowledge is nothing but the power of self-manifestation of consciousness. This power of knowledge (*jñātṛtva Śakti*) has three aspects : the power of knowing (jñāna Śakti), the power of remembrance (smṛti Śakti) and the power of differentiation (apohana *Śakti*). The whole of practical life depends upon

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1. Devaraja, N. K., *Śaṁkara's theory of Knowledge*, pp. 94-6.
2. Bṛh. Up. I. 4. 10.
3. Saṁkara's Commentary on the Gītā, II. 16.

this triad of powers. It is due to this triad that the manifestation of the finite subjects and objects becomes possible. These powers are manifest in various ways ; the capacity for such manifestation is the power of freedom.[1]

Jñāna Śakti is that aspect of the power of knowledge which gives rise to the separate manifestation of only some ābhāsas or entities which lie merged in the great ocean of consciousness.[2] But mere manifestation does not constitute knowledge. In order that the momentary ābhāsa may serve the purpose in practical life, we have to admit some power which provides the continuity of experience : this is the power of remembrance. It is owing to its power of remembrance that *Saṁvid* manifests the knowing subject who retains the affections of the momentary ābhāsas and is able to revive them in future.

However, mere reflection and its retention would not constitute knowledge, unless the subjective and the objective manifestations, both of which are identical with consciousness, be also manifest as separate from each other. The power which manifests the subjective and objective ābhāsas as apparently cut off from one another as well as from consciousness is called *apohana Śakti*. It is owing to this power that Saṁvid becomes manifest, as if it were, different from itself and is known as the ever renewing cognition. Though, even when it becomes extrovert, the subjectivity of consciousness is never affected.

5. Memory

In order to show the necessity of admitting the self-luminous active subject, the Śaiva Absolutists discuss the

1. एतासां च ज्ञानादिशक्तीनां असंख्य प्रकारो वैचित्र्यंविकल्प इति तत्सामर्थ्यं स्वातन्त्र्यं अपराधीनं पूर्णं महदैश्वर्यं...। IPV, I. III. 7.
2. स्वरूपान्तर्ब्रुडितं अर्थराशि अपरमपि भिन्नाकारं आत्मनि परिगृह्य कंचिदेव अर्थं स्वरूपादुन्मग्नं आभासयति इति आपतितम् । सैषा ज्ञानशक्तिः । Ibid.

phenomenon of memory at great length. He asserts that without memory knowledge would not be possible. But memory itself could not be possible without a permanent experiencing subject.

The Buddhists hold that belief in a parmanent Self to account for memory is not at all necessary. For, if the self changes as a result of production of *Śaṁskāra* then it ceases to be eternal ; but if it does not change, in that case the assumption of the Śaṁskāra is useless. According to him the chain of consciousness is affected in a particular way at the time of experience. When it disappears each momentary consciousness produces an identical consciousness. Accordingly, the subsequent consciousness carries a residual trace or Śaṁskāra of the former consciousness. Later on, when this residual trace is revived at the time of an experience, it places the previous subjective consciousness in relation to the object of former experience. In this way the phenomenon of memory takes place.

Refuting the Buddhist view of memory, the Śaivite points out that though remembrance arises out of the residual trace of the previous experience, yet being itself self-confined it cannot illumine the former experience.[1] And unless the former experience is illumined there can be no remembrance in which the former experience is referred to as 'that.' Knowledge being self-luminous, one cognition cannot be object of another cognition. Knowledge would cease to be self-luminous, if one cognition was to be illumined by another cognition. Each cognition illumines its own object alone. It is like dumb, deaf, or both, in relation to the objects of other cognitions and cannot make them manifest.[2] Now memory also, being a form of knowledge, cannot illumine the former knowledge or

1. आत्मनिष्ठे स्वप्रकाशज्ञाने विषयस्येव अनुभवस्य प्राच्यस्य अप्रकाशात् । IPV, I. III 1.

2. तदेतानि स्वविषय प्रकाशमात्ररूपाणि परविषये जडान्धानेडमूकत्ल्पानि, न च अन्योन्यस्य प्रकाशरूपाणि । Ibid, I. III. 6.

experience. Nor can it be held that because of its having been originated from the residual trace memory has the former experience also as an object ; for experience, being self-luminous, cannot become the object of another experience. For example, the experience of colour cannot become an object of the experience of taste. Nor can it be said that though the former experience does not become an object of memory, yet it appears to be so like the object of an erroneous perception. For, unlike the object of erroneous perception, the object of memory is true. Memory is not a form of error, but a form of knowledge.

The fact that memory arises out of residual trace merely makes it similar to direct experience (in respect of having the same object). But it does not make the consciousness of similarity in memory possible. Thus the consciousness of similarity in memory cannot be a product of direct experience, nor of mere memory.[1] Experience, whether direct or remembered, cannot illumine another experience. Though residual trace can make objective reference in memory possible, it cannot make direct experience an object of memory, nor can it give rise to the consciousness that the object of memory is the object of former experience.

But the similarity in memory is possible, according to the Śaivite, because it is the same Light which shines in direct experience as well as in memory. However, the light also cannot make the object shine, if it be self-confined. Nor can the light, which illumines the object, be supposed to be momentary. Hence it has to be admitted that the Light is universal and includes all objects within itself. The subject

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1. न हि अनुभवज्ञानं सादृश्यं गमयति, नापि स्मृतिज्ञानं, परस्पर असंवेदने द्वयनिष्ठसादृश्याध्यवसायायोगात्, एवं अन्यस्य च तदुभयवेदनरूपस्य अभावात् इति संस्कारात् पर सविषयतामात्रं स्मृतेः सिद्धम्, न तु अनुभवविषय, नापि अस्य विषयस्य पूर्वानुभवविषयीकृतत्वम्··· ।
Ibid, I. III. 2.

of the former experience, being also present at the time of memory, and determinately experiencing the object of former experience as 'that,' is said to remember because he is free.[1] It is because of his freedom that he has the consciousness 'that'. The essential nature of the experience 'that' is that it is not the experience of the pure subject, the 'I,' which is entirely free from the limitations of time etc., nor is it the experience of something which is altogether different from the subject, but that of the object which was formerly differentiated from the universal self. Because of its association with the finite subject, limited by time and place of former perception, it was not merged in the 'I,' but was separately placed in the condition of *saṁskāra*, or wrapped up in darkness, as if it were. And when the cover of darkness is removed from the object, it shines as before, as differentiated from the subject.[2]

Memory differs from error and imagination. It is not consistent to hold memory as a form of erroneous knowledge. If so, how could memory serve practical purpose in life ? How can error be the basis of worldly transactions, which are concerned with the real objects ? Further, if memory is regarded as error, why should it be supposed to depend upon the residual trace left by former experience ? As all transactions depend upon memory, there would be no practical life if memory were erroneous. In fact, the very first and the most important kind of cognition, viz. direct perception, would not be possible without the conscious unification of the former and the latter states of

1. IPV. I, III. 7.
2. यत् सर्वथा अकालकलितस्वरूपपरामर्शनमेव न, नापि अत्यन्तभेदेन विमर्शनमेव अपि तु यो भाव: पूर्वमनुभवकाले तद्देश कालप्रमात्रन्तरसाचिव्येन पृथक्कृतो न च अहन्तायामेवलीनीकृत:, सा तादृगेव तमसैव आच्छाद्य अवस्थापित: सस्कारशब्दवाच्य:, तस्य तमाच्छादकं अपहस्तयति, तत्र अपहस्तिते स पूर्ववत् पृथक्कृते एवावभाति । Ibid. I. IV. 7.

experience, which is possible on the basis of memory alone. Thus, rejecting, accepting, actuating promising and similar other transactions, which are possible due to unification of cognition with one another, would come to nought if the view of the opponent—that memory is erroneous knowledge—be accepted.[1] In the case of error, the object is referred to as 'this.' It is erroneous because the collocation of ābhāsas to which it is supposed to refer is not really there. But in memory the object is referred to as 'that.' In this case, the image of the object of former experience is present as *saṁskāra* in the self. When memory takes place the psychic image of the object is revived and hence it is referred to as 'that.' Unlike memory, the object of imagination is wholly a new creation of the finite subject.

The Śaivite believes that the subject and the object have two aspects : the momentary and the permanent. While the momentary aspect of the two dissolve in consciousness soon after cognition takes place, the permanent aspect of the object remains merged in the permanent aspect of the subject.[2] The subject has complete power to unite or disunite the various ābhāsas of which it is a permanent support. When the saṁskāra is revived the object becomes illumined in association with the former time and the feeling of pleasure etc. The phenomenon of memory which arises when the ābhāsas of former experience shine in relation to the subject is like small innumerable lights shining in the same place.[3] Here there is the consciousness of the past in association with the present.

The notion of self-luminosity of experience is not given up on the view that past experience is reflected in memory. The self-luminosity of experience remains unaffected like the light of lamp which illumines the object in conjunction

1. Ibid. I. III, 6.
2. Pandey, K. C., op. cit., p. 424.
3. ...तदेव आभासान्तरख्यामिश्रणया दीपसहस्रसंमूर्च्छनवत् स्फुटीभवति । Ibid. p. 425.

with other lights. Ultimately, it is *Maheśvara*, the great Lord, who in the form of the limited subject retains within himself all the experiences and their objects which reappear at the time of memory. It is He alone who remembers and His remembrance is nothing but assuming the form of the limited subject.[1]

It is not correct to hold that. there being no manifestation of object in memory, the awareness 'I remember this' is iilusory. For admittedly there is a clear consciousness of the object in memory. If it were not so, memory would not differ from deep sleep or unconsciousness. There would be no mental reaction if the object did not shine in memory. But the objeet does not shine either as altogether dissociated or associated with the time of its former experience For, on any of these two alternatives consciousness would assume the form 'this' and not 'that.' The object also cannot shine apart from memory, as something external to it. Because in that case it would not shine as being remembered ; instead it would shlne as an object of perception,

The difficulty that the object and its cognition would be as good as nothing, as both belong to two different times, one would be destroyed before the other comes into existence, does not hold good on this theory. For, it is the subject who determines the various cognitions by unifying them into one whole. The former experience shines objectively as associated with the present time. The subject is free in uniting or separating the various cognitions according to his free will.

The former experience itself does not become an object of memory. For the former experience does not shine separately as 'this' in memory. It merely shines as 'I

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1. एवं च स एव परमेश्वरः 'स्मरति'। एतदेव हि तस्य स्मर्तृत्वम्–यत् एवं प्रकारपरामर्शौचितकालकलादिस्पर्शसहिष्णुमायाप्रमातृभावपरिग्रहः इति मायाविद्याद्वयाद्वयमयम्। IPV. I. IV. 1.

experienced before.' This shining of the former experience is possible only because of its resting on the subject.[1] The experience does not shine apart from memory as 'this.' The particular form of experience, such as 'I had that experience,' in which experience seems to shine apart from memory, is nothing but merely an analysis of memory 'I saw.'[2]

5. Abhasavada

The Śaiva theory of knowledge is also, at the same time the theory of creation or manifestation and is called *ābhāsavāda*. Ābhāsavāda is both an epistemological and an ontological theory. Of the two kinds of relations, existing between knower and known, and between cause and effect, it is the relation between knower and known which is the most important. Everything depends upon this relation ; it is the basis of discussion on the objects and means of right knowledge etc.[3]

Knowledge is nothing but I-consciousness being affected by the variety of manifestations (ābhāsa) brought about by the subject himself.[4] The subject manifests himself as the object of knowledge ; the object has no existence independently of the subject.[5] The objects of determinate cognition, such as the blue etc., constitute the middle points in the thought process. In reality they are identical with self-consciousness ; for all of them ultimately rest upon or merge in the original thought, the 'I.' Accordingly, even the awareness 'I know this blue' is in reality nothing

1. Ibid, I. IV. 4,
2. स्मर्यते यदद्दगासीन्मे सेत्येवमपि भेदत: ।
तद्व्याकरणमेवास्या मया द्दष्टमिति स्मृते: ।। IPV. I. IV. 6.
3. तच्च द्विविधमेव परमार्थत: ज्ञाप्यज्ञापकता कार्यकारणता च, तत्र पूर्वस्यां मानमेयभावादिचिन्तास्पदभूतायां सर्वं उत्तचरं वक्ष्यमाणं च आयत्तं...।
IPV, II. III. Intr,
4. IPV. I, VIII.
5. Ibid. I. V. 15.

more than 'I shine.'[1] The various objects of knowledge shine in identity with the subject, like a city shining in a mirror.[2] Both the positive and the negative images of the object, e.g. the 'jar' and the 'not-jar,' are included within the subject. During the state of indeterminate knowledge the jar is one with pure consciousness ; at that time, it is infinite and perfect like consciousness. The subject splits this perfect being of the object, as it cannot be of any use in this form, and differentiates the jar from the not-jar at the time of knowledge. Exclusive separation of the subject and the object has been denied in Śaiva Absolutism. Such exclusive separation constitutes the chief characteristic of the Vedānta epistemology according to which the two are opposed in nature like light and darkness. According to the Vedānta, what constitutes empirical knowledge is the unwarranted mutuality of the two. In Śaivism, on the other hand, the two are regarded as identical in the integral unity of consciousness. This integral unity manifests itself as finite subject and object at the time of determinate knowledge. What makes the phenomenon of knowledge possible is the apparent separation of the two on the background of the integral unity. Knowledge could not be possible if the object was really different from the subject. If the subject and the object were really cut off from one another, the meeting of the two would be as impossible as that of the two logs which are carried away by two opposite currents in the sea. Moreover, if the subject and the object are exclusive to each other even when knowledge takes place, and if luminosity belongs to the object itself, then the question arises : Why is the object, which is self-luminous, manifest only to a particular subject and not to all subjects alike ?

Again, the mutual relationship of the objects can be explained only if they are supposed to have their being in

1. 'नीलं इदं वेद्मि' इत्यापि हि 'अहं प्रकाशे' इतीयत्तत्त्वम् । Ibid. I, V. 17.
2. ···तस्य च प्रमातुरन्तः सर्वार्थविभासः, चिन्मात्रशरीरोऽपि तत्सामानाधिकरण्यवृत्तिरपि दर्पणनगरन्यायेनास्ति···। IPV I. VI. 3.

the subject. It has to be assumed that the objects, such as 'blue,' pleasure etc., ultimately merge in the great ocean of consciousness, which is essentially the subject, and are carried to it through various determinate experiences, which can be compared to the currents of various rivers. The insentient objects cannot become united by themselves; it is the *saṁvid* which makes them united.[1]

The fact is that both the subject and object are manifestations of absolute consciousness. Accordingly, the phenomenon of knowledge can be compared to the rise of two waves, subjective and objective, on the surface of the sea water, while the rise of the subjective wave constitutes the shining of the finite subject, which has the capacity to receive reflection, the rise of the objective wave is the manifestation of the object. Knowledge takes place when the rising subjective wave becomes affected by the objective wave.

The objective wave is in fact, a collection of ābhāsas from which only a few constituent ābhāsas are reflected on a particular subjective wave. Each ābhāsa, as it is known, is itself a collection of various ābhāsas, each of which requires a separate subjective wave in order to be reflected. Similarly, the causal efficiency of each ābhāsa also depends upon its being determinately cognised. And the determinate cognition itself depends upon the interest, need and the analytical capacity of the knowing subject.[2] For example, in the case of a valuable jewel, which itself is a collocation of a number of ābhāsas, the causal efficiency depends upon the knowledge of its constituent ābhāsas. To put it in other words, causal efficiency of a jewel depends upon the knowing capacity of the subject. The causal efficiency of a jewel would be different in case of an ordinary farmer then in the case of an expert jeweller.

In a way, we are all confined to our own individual worlds. These individual worlds are neither illusory

1. IPV. I. VII. 2.
2. Pandey, K. C., op. cit. pp. 388-9.

appearances, nor are they mere creations of our imagination. They are real objective worlds being constituted of real objects or ābhāsas, existing independently of us. Each ābhāsa is in itself a separate entity and, as such, is uniform and eternal in itself. All change or becoming is confined to the realm of union or separation of these ābhāsas.[1]

The manifestation and the union of these ābhāsas is controlled by the power of niyati or order of universal consciousness.[2] An event or object is nothing but an ābhāsa or appearance on the mirror-like surface of universal consciousness. Thus *Vastu* or object, *tattva* or substance, and *prameya* are synonymous terms. Accordingly earth is the ābhāsa of hardness, fire and red colour are the ābhāsa of red, rajas is the ābhāsa of union, arrangement or sanniveśa is *niyati* or order, the very essence of which is negation (abhāva). For instance, the shape of jar, like that of a big belly with a base, is nothing but the strange shining of the negation of the ābhāsa of earth. The ābhāsa of difference is māyā. The ābhāsa of the self-luminous consciousness, which is beyond māyā, is the Śiva tattva. It is the Lord alone who has the power to unite or separate the various ābhāsas.[3] The different relative positions of different cognitions to one another in the case of the relationship between cause and effect have been determined by the subject because of his freedom. It is not possible for the objects of knowledge to fix themselves.[4]

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1. Ibid. p. 390.
2. एवमाभासस्तन्मेलनं च नियमानुप्राणितम् । IPV. II. III. 13.
3. वस्तु तत्त्वं प्रमेयम्—इति पर्यायाः । तथा च काठिन्याभास इति पृथ्वी, लोहिताभास इति रूपं तेजश्च, मेलनाभासो रजः, सन्निवेशस्तु नियतिरूपः, नियतिर्हि नियमः, स च अभावप्राणः, अभावस्फुरणमेव च पृथिव्याभासस्य विचित्रतया चकासत् पृथुबुध्नोदराकारता, भेदाभासश्च माया, तत्पृष्ठे सत्यप्रकाशाभासश्च शिवतत्वम् " । सर्वथा तावदत्र प्रमेये भगवत एव भेदने च अभेदने च स्वातन्त्र्यं.... । IPV. II. III. 13.
4. एवं कार्यकारणभावादौ विश्रान्तिवैचित्र्यं प्रमेयासंभवि प्रमात्रा स्वातंत्र्येण निर्मितं तत एव अस्य प्रमास्वतन्त्रतादायिवाच्यम् । IPV. I. VII. 6.

In order to realize the Absolute, the ultimate unity, one should try to see non-difference among the different ābhāsas ; one should attempt at realizing that all ābhāsas are essentially one with Saṁvid.[1] Every judgement presupposes the unifying activity of the subject. Cancellation or affirmation is possible only due to the integrality of consciousness. When the previous cognition of silver (in the case of shell-silver) is sublated, the later cognition of shell does not play any part in cancelling it. One cognition cannot annul another cognition. Sublation of cognition is possible only when both the sublated and the sublating cognitions, the cognition of silver as well as that of shell, rest on one self-consciousness.[2] The later cognition 'this is not silver' rests in the subject as replacing the previous cognition 'this is silver.'

Objects and events are essentially of the nature of ābhāsa ; their very shining depends upon the self. No object can shine by itself, independently of others. Firstly, the object, being inert, cannot have self-luminosity. And if luminosity essentially belongs to the object, then why is the object manifest to some persons and not to others also ? If the luminosity of the object is self-confined, it would not even be known. For knowledge depends upon the object being given in association with others. There being no such association in the case of the object which is self-confined, the object would not be determinately cognised. Therefore it has to be assumed that the object shines as dependent upon 'others.' But the other, upon which the determinate shining of the object depends also cannot be insentient, otherwise it would be like 'blind leading the blind.' Thus, the 'other,' on which the

1. ....घटगताभासभेदाभेददृष्टिरेव च परमार्थाद्वयदृष्टिप्रवेशे उपाय: समवलम्बनीय:, न तु व्यवहारोऽपि अयं परमेश्वरस्वरूपानुप्रवेश विरोधी...।
Ibid. II. III. 13.

2. यदा तु रजतज्ञानं शुक्तिज्ञानं च एकत्र स्वसंवेदने विश्राम्यत: तदा एतत् उपपद्यते..... । IPV. I. VII. 6.

object of knowledge depends, is essentially of the nature of consciousness, but not of pure consciousness ; for the pure cannot give rise to the determinate shining of anything. Consciousness in its essential nature faces the object, is tinged by it and shines as so affected, when it makes the object shine determinately. The capacity of consciousness to shine as affected is itself the capacity to manifest the object determinately. Accordingly, the ābhāsa, or the manifestation or illumination of an object, is nothing but self-determination of consciousness.

Here, it might be objected that on the doctrine of ābhāsavāda all other objects should equally be illumined when the illumination of a particular object takes place, for all objects are essentially one with luminosity. Thus, everything should always be illumined. Nor would the finite subject, who is ever identical with consciousness, shine as distinct or separate from the object of knowledge. In reply to this, the Śaivites hold that it is precisely for this reason that everything, including the finite knower and the object of knowledge, has to be regarded as a mere manifestation of the Light. As nothing can bear separation from light, it has to be assumed that the Light itself shines as limited. When the light is manifest as limited subject it is known as *Śūnya Pramātā*, which is of the nature of not-being, as it were. The extrovert subjective ābhāsa is manifest fresh at every moment in order to receive the affections of newly manifest objects.

As we have already seen, an ābhāsa is not a simple entity ; it is a collocation of various ābhāsas. The constituent ābhāsas are different in each case. Even in the case of the object, which has been constructed as one particular object by determinative activity, the ābhasas differ according to the taste, purpose or established tradition that a cogniser follows.[1] Though the ābhāsa differs

1. "अनुसन्धानेन मिश्रताविमर्शेन सावितो य एकोऽर्थः स्वलक्षणात्मा तत्र एकस्मिन्नपि सति रुचि—स्वातंत्र्यम्, अर्थित्वम्—अर्थक्रियाभिलाषपरवशताम्, व्युत्पत्ति वृद्धव्यवहारशरणतां च अनतिक्रम्य भिद्यत एव आभासः ।
IPV II. III. 3,

according to the individual taste, yet it is one ābhāsa as it rests on the ābhāsa of time and place. The ābhāsa of time and place impart particularity and exercise the function of, as it were, destroying eternality and omnipresence which give rise to the idea of universality.

For example, in the case of the well known ābhāsa 'man,' who is known to be conscious, sometimes only 'length' is perceived. However, length is common to the trees also. At another time only its circularity is perceived, which is common to many other things, such as rocks etc. also. Sometimes only the quality of being a man, i.e. having freedom is perceived, which is common to all men. This selectivity in perception, perceiving only a particular ābhāsa at a particular time, is possible because the perceiver is free. It is due to his free will, which is independent of purpose or interest (*ruci*), that he selects only a particular ābhāsa out of the configuration of ābhāsas.[1] All other ābhāsas are also to be explained in a similar way. From the illustration of the ābhāsa 'man' many other well known ābhāsas can be differentiated from one another in the ābhāsa of 'smoke' also, e.g. the smoke of sandal, of gas, etc.

Likewise, we can ascertain a variety of ābhāsas in the case of an ābhāsa which is not ordinarily known to have them. Let us take the ābhāsa of jar. When a broken-hearted man, who is having a feeling or consciousness of 'nothingness,' sees a jar, he merely perceives the ābhāsa 'existence,' or being as it is ; for at that moment he has no awareness of any other ābhāsa even in name. Similarly, when a person who desires to fetch water perceives the ābhāsa jar, his perception is of a different nature. As he is interested simply in something which can be taken to some place and then brought back, he perceives the ābhāsa 'thing' only. But if a person is desirous of price, he perceives the ābhāsa 'gold' only ; the person who is desirous of pleasure perceives the ābhāsa 'brightness' ; one who

1. IPV II. III. 4-5.

wants to have extremely hard substance perceives the ābhāsa 'hardness.' The fact is that besides inclination and taste, perception of an object also depends upon the intellectual capacity of the perceiver.[1]

According to the Śaiva Absolutism, the being of the object does not consist in its participation in universal Being (sattā) ; because this view is too narrow and involves the fallacies of infinite regress and uselessness. Nor is the being of an object constituted by causal efficiency as the two are totally different. Nor are the objects always found to discharge causal efficiency. Moreover, the discharge of causal function by an object is not always perceptible. Therefore, in the case of imperceptibility of causal function the object would have to remain imperceptible, even though it might have existence. Similar would be the difficulty, if it is held that it is not the discharge of causal efficiency but the capacity to discharge causal efficiency which constitutes the being of the object. The main objection against these Buddhist views is that causal efficiency etc. do not shine, and therefore, they are as good as horns of a man. Accordingly, the Śaivite holds that the being of the object is nothing but its shining (*Prakāśamānatā*).[2]

Thus, in every way, the object of knowledge is nothing but ābhāsa, and cognition (*vimarśa*) also is separate for each ābhāsa. Likewise, the capacity for serving a fixed purpose also rests separately on each ābhāsa ; this is known through positive and negative concomitance. For instance, by the ābhāsa of mere existence only the breaking of heart is avoided. Each ābhāsa has, thus, its own separate functional capacity. From whatever point of view we reflect upon the object, we find that it is essentially nothing more than an ābhāsa ; it shines objectively only as

1. Ibid.

2. सर्वस्य च अस्य अप्रकाशमानत्वेन नरशृङ्गप्रायत्वम्, ···इति प्रकाशमानतैव अनुन्मूल्यमानतथोचितविमर्शपरिस्पन्दा भावस्य सत्त्वम्··· । IPV II. II. 7.

an ābhāsa ; as ābhāsa alone it is determinately cognised and serves the required purpose.[1]

6. Some objections against Abhasavada

The question arises, if every ābhāsa is a thing by itself, then how can jar which is a collocation of various ābhāsas be regarded as a thing. To this the Ābhāsavādins hold that the causal efficiency of those ābhāsas which shine objectively as resting upon a common ābhāsa, such as the jar, is collective. On the other hand, the causal efficiency of those ābhāsas which shine separately is individually fixed.[2] Some ābhāsa has to be admitted to be the chief ābhāsa in a configuration of various ābhāsas. For all practical purposes, this chief ābhāsa might be regarded as the substratum or common abode of all configurating ābhāsas. Accordingly it has to be accepted that the different ābhāsas rest upon one chief ābhāsa. Being together these ābhāsas constitute one particular configuration and discharge a collective function, though even then they retain their individual differences. When it is determinately known, each ābhāsa has its separate fixed function. No ābhāsa loses its individuality even when it appears to rest upon a substratum.[3]

The Ābhāsavādin tries to establish, against the Buddhist and the Vedāntin, that the object of knowledge is characterised both by unity and diversity. This characteristic of the object is indubitable because it ultimately rests upon one subject.[4] The object shines as separate on account of its particularity ; it also shines as associated or mixed with others owing to its universality. Both of these aspects of the object should be regarded as real, as there is

1. एवं येन येन मुखेन अर्थो विचार्यंते तेन तेन आभासमात्रात्मैव तथैव प्रति-भासनात् विमर्शनात् अर्थक्रियाकरणाच्च इति सिद्धम् । Ibid. II. III. 4-5.
2. Ibid. II. III. 6.
3. बहुवचनेन ऐक्येऽपि स्वरूपभेदापरित्याग उक्तः''' । Ibid
4. Ibid II. III. 14.

no reason to prove the falsity of either. Finding this contrariety between unity and diversity difficult to maintain, the Vedāntin regards it ultimately inexplicable or illusory. The Buddhist, on the other hand, holds that because it shines in determinate knowledge alone, therefore, it has no real or objective existence. But the fact is that both, the Vedāntin and the Buddhists, have deceived themselves as well as the common people.[1] The Ābhāsavādin claims that the shining of both of them is possible as resting on the universal consciousness which is free. Even the birds and animals know through their own experience that because of resting within Saṁvid, and therefore becoming one with it, even the blazing fire and water are not contradictory.[2]

Just as the various rays of the lamp, when scattered, do not discharge the function of bringing about the perception of a minute object, similarly an ābhāsa by itself is not capable of discharging the function which is performed by a configuration of ābhāsas. Like the focussed rays of the lamp, which illumine the minute objects, or like the various currents which collectively discharge the function of giving rise to innumerable waves, the various ābhāsas such as 'jar,' 'of gold,' 'red' and 'it is fit to be used for bringing water to pour on the head of Śiva', when combined together, discharge the function of causing great pleasure. It is important to notice, in this connexion, that only those ābhāsas which are not of opposite nature get mixed up together, while those ābhāsas which are of opposite nature are not mixed up together. For instance, the ābhāsa of 'form' does not mix up with the ābhāsa of 'air,' because the two are opposed in nature. The nature of these ābhāsas, by virtue of which they unite or separate

1. Ibid. Bhaskarī, Vol. III. p. 159.

2. संवेदनविश्रान्तं तु द्वयमपि भाति संवेदनस्य स्वातन्त्र्यात् । सर्वस्य हि तिरश्चोऽपि एतत् स्वसंवेनसिद्धं—यत् संविदन्तविश्रान्तमेकतामापाद्यमानं जलज्वलनमपि अविरुद्धम्''' । Ibid.

with each other, is fixed up by the power of *Niyati* or order. Thus, the *svalakśana*, which is a configuration of the various ābhāsas, such as 'jar,' 'gold' and 'red' etc., which are not opposed in nature, gives rise to the idea of oneness.[1]

But here the difficulty would arise that if each ābhāsa is known by itself then the validity of the manifestation of each ābhāsa would depend upon the ābhāsa itself; for example the validity of manifestation 'fire' depends upon the cognition 'fire,' of 'smoke' depends upon the cognition 'smoke.' This being the case, there would be no necessary connection between objects and events, nor would there be any possibility of relations, such as cause and effect etc. On this view fire could be perceived without the perception of smoke, and vice versa.

The Śaivite holds that these difficulties are not genuine. For, though the ābhāsa 'fire' in itself is unique and is not associated with other ābhāsas, such as 'time', 'place' etc., yet it is known with certainty only when it is united with as many ābhāsas as are made invariably concomitant with it by the power of *Niyati*. The ābhāsa fire is, by its very nature, invariably concomitant with the manifestation, or ābhāsa, of its being the effect of fuel and cause of smoke, and also of its being hot in nature. And it is perceived as such at all times and places, because these ābhāsas are mixed up together into one. Even those characteristics which do not naturally belong to it and are merely conventional, such as being signified by the term 'fire' or the capacity to bring about the ocular perception of jar etc., are ascertained by means of a single perception itself. To the perceiver the ābhāsa fire is always known as invariably concomitant with other ābhāsas, which are naturally or

1. येषाम् अविरोध: त एव आभासा मिश्रीभवन्ति, नहि रूपाभासो मारुताभासेन मिश्रीभवति-विरोधात्, सोऽपि च नियतिशक्त्युत्थापित: । पृथक् ये दीपप्रकाशा: तेषां संबन्धि यदेकं सागरे स्रोतसां च यदेकं वस्तु तेन कार्या यथा ऐक्यधी: तथा अविरुद्धा: ये अवभासा घटलोहितकाञ्चनादय: तेषां सम्बन्धि यदेकं स्वलक्षणं तत्कार्या ऐक्यधीरिति संबन्ध:...। Ibid. II. III, 7.

conventionally mixed up with it. However, ultimately in all cases the invariable concomitance of one ābhāsa with other ābhāsas, whether natural or otherwise, is due to the working of the Divine power of *Niyati*, which operates differently in relation to different objects. For example, it manifests fuel as the cause of fire as associated with the past ; it also manifests smoke as the effect of fire as associated with future time ; similarly it also manifests heat as associated with fire at all times and its expressibility by such words as fire etc. for a short duration only. Hence the invariable concomitance of the ābhāsa 'smoke' with the ābhāsa 'fire' depends upon the working of the power of *Niyati*. All the characteristics of 'fire,' viz. its being both an effect and a cause, its being hot and its being signified by the various words which stand for it, its being without any odour, its going upward and being of the opposite nature from water, and so on, are known through only one means of right knowledge.[1] Thus the essential nature of an object is made manifest by a single means of right knowledge which operates on each ābhāsa separately. The proper invariable concomitance of one ābhāsa with another is ascertained by the introvert Light or *saṁvid* on which depend all preceding experiences which had various ābhāsas as their objects. However, this introvert light of consciousness is the valid means only in regard to manifestation 'oneness' and not in the case of manifestations which are unified.[2]

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1. कार्यता कारणता उष्णता च तस्य शब्दस्यार्थता तत्तच्छब्दाभिधेयता, आदि ग्रहणात्—गन्धरसशून्यता उर्ध्वदिक्संयोगिता जलविरोधिता च, इत्येवभूतो य आत्मा स्वभावो बह्न्यादौ स एकस्मादेव प्रमाणात् मतः-संविदित इति यावत्। Ibid. II. III. 8.

2. एवं भावस्वभावव्यवस्थापनं प्रत्याभासविश्रान्तेन एकेन प्रमाणेन क्रियते, तेषामपि आभासानां यथोचितं यदन्योन्यनान्तरीयकत्वं तत् एकेन संवेदन-रूपेण तदनेकप्रमिताभासविषयपूर्वप्रवृत्तसंवेदनकलापानुप्राणकान्तर्मुखस्व-स्वरूपेण निश्चीयते, तच्च ऐक्याभासमात्रे अनुसंधानरूपं प्रमाणम्……। Ibid.

But how can that which is a mere ābhāsa give rise to purposive activity on the part of the perceiver ? The Śaiva answer to this question consists in showing that 'the activity of the person, with purposive attitude, is possible with reference to a particular object at the time of its perception, when it is determined by other cognitions, such as those of time etc.'[1] The causal efficiency of an object is due to its determination, in which the association of an ābhāsa with the ābhāsa of time and place is very important. The determination of ābhāsa would serve no purpose unless it is definitely known as such. But it would not give rise to any activity if it rests on the subject who is pure consciousness and is, therefore, free from the limitations of time, place etc., even if it is grasped determinately. Mental or physical activity which takes place at the time of perception of an object, which is nothing but a combination of various ābhāsas, is possible only if the object be determined by other perception, such as that of place and time and any other characteristic that we unify. A purposive activity is possible not from one but many Pramāṇas. This collective applicability of Pramāṇas cannot be explained on any theory except ābhāsavāda. It is possible on the doctrine of ābhāsavāda, as resting upon the subject whose essential nature is consciousness. On the analogy of unification of perception in the case of sweet-smelling objects etc., this very unification of Pramāṇas has been called '*yojika*' or '*yukti*.'[2] This is so not only in the case of perception but also in the case of inference. The various perceptions of the ābhāsas of smoke, fire, their invariable concomitance and of 'mountain' separately, as well as the inference 'there is fire,' which asserts the presence of that which is not known through perception, form one unified

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1. सातु देशादिकाध्यक्षान्तरभिन्ने स्वलक्षणे ।
तात्कालिकी प्रवृत्तिः स्यादर्थिनः··· । IPK. II, III, 9.

2. इयमेव च सा प्रमाणानां योजना, योजिका च युक्तिरित्युच्यते ।
IPV. II, III. 9.

experience upon which the purposive activity of the inferer is based.[1]

The Ābhāsavādin holds that the 'sameness or identity of the objects, which appear to be different because of their nearness or remoteness, their direct relation to senses or its absence, their externality or internality, or defect in the accessories of knowledge, remains intact, because they primarily shine as such; a fact which is made manifest by subsequent intellectual reaction, which recognises them to be the same.'[2] As there is determinate consciousness of the identity of the object, therefore from the point of view of chief or principal manifestation (i.e. the objective manifestion of the sameness) the sameness of the object, whether it be far or near, is unaffected. Similarly the identity of the objects given in perception and inference is possible because it is made to shine predominantly in a subsequent cognition in which they are recognised as identical, such as in the judgement : 'the same as was inferred has been perceived.' The identity of the object of reflection and sensation is also established in the same way, as in the judgement, 'the same that I saw then am now imagining within.' The objects which appear differently due to the defective light of the lamp are also similarly recognised as the same : 'the same red lotus that appeared to be blue in the lamp light is now seen to be red in the sunlight.' Likewise, all those objects which have different appearances either because of difference in the perceptive organs or because of some other reasons are the same as their essential nature (i.e. their identity) shines in recognition.

7. Relations

Action, relation, change etc. cannot be satisfactorily explained in those systems which admit the independent existence of the objective world.[3] However, they can

1. Ibid.
2. IPV. II. III. 10-11.
3. Ibid. II. II.

easily be explained on the theory that everything is essentially an ābhāsa. The ideas of action, relation, universal, substance, place and time etc. are not unreal. For these ideas continue to shine and all that shines in determinate cognition cannot be regarded unreal, because the essential nature of reality is nothing but luminosity.[1] Moreover, these categories possess functional capacity ; they serve our purpose in practical life and are based upon unity-in-multiplicity.[2] The attainment of purpose by means of an object that has both unity and multiplicity is possible for a subject only according to the view that action, relation etc. are real.[3]

Descending to the empirical level the universal consciousness manifests the categories of action etc. Among these categories relation is the principal category.[4] Whatever shines on the back of what figures in consciousness as the meaning of a bare word is relation. Accordingly all *Kārakas* are nothing but relations. Only in certain cases relation admits of being called by a different name. For example, the word relation is substituted by 'universal' etc. to indicate the particular type of relation of those who have similar features, which can be represented by one word, as 'cows.' But the word relation is retained, in case another word cannot be used. Hence all measures of land, grain and gold etc., and all that is included in them, such as small and big etc., and number separateness etc., are forms of relation only. Even time, which is the essence of every thing through action, itself depends upon relation.

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1. नहि विकल्पेषु प्रतिभासमानं अवस्तुसत् इति हि उक्तम्, 'प्रकाशतैव वस्तुत्वम्' इति । Ibid. II. II. 3.
2. क्रियासंबन्धसामान्यद्रव्यदिक्कालबुद्धय: ।
सत्या: स्थैर्योपयोगाभ्यामेकानेकाश्रया मता: ॥ Ibid. Kārikā 1.
3. एवमेत्रार्थसिद्धि: स्यान्मातुरर्थक्रियार्थिन: ।
भेदाभेदवतार्थेन तेन न भ्रान्तिरीदृशी ॥ Ibid. Kārikā. 7
4. Ibid, II. II. 3.

Thus practical life, in all its various aspects, entirely depends upon relation.[1]

When the objects, which are self-confined, are unified, in so far as they become mutually connected in the subject, they constitute the basis of the idea of relation.[2] For instance, the ābhāsas 'king' and 'man' both are independent of each other and self-confined. However, when they are unified in the subject, not absolutely—because then the difference will completely disappear—but only in so far as they are mutually connected in respect of their forms, or when they ride the swing of oneness which has two poles, unity and diversity, then they constitute the idea of relation. In this state of unity, the two are not merged in the subject, nor do they merge in each other, nor stand absolutely apart from each other. They represent unity in difference, both of which appear and disappear simultaneously, not successively. The essential nature of relation is that its multiplicity is outside the subject but its unity is within the subject.[3] Thus, relation is nothing but unity in multiplicity.

Here, some opponents may say that unity and multiplicity, being contrary to each other, cannot exist in one and the samething.[4] Moreover, unity and multiplicity being experienced in two different moments, how can different experiences refer to one and the same thing ? The so-called 'unity-in-multiplicity' cannot be experienced. It is given neither in indeterminate nor in determinate knowledge.

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1. यदपि च कारकं तदपि क्रियामुखप्रेक्षि, सापि कालं प्राणेश्वरम् आश्रयति, सोऽपि क्रियाद्वारेण सर्वभावात्मा सम्बन्धं उद्धुरयति इति संवन्धाधीनैव इयं चित्रा लोकयात्रा । Ibid. Bhāskarī, Vol. II. p. 49.
2. स्वात्मनिष्ठा विविक्ताभा भावा एकप्रमातरि ।
   अन्योन्यान्वयरूपैक्ययुजः संवन्धधीपदम् ॥ Ibid. Kārikā 4.
3. …एवं बहिरनेकता, अन्तस्तु परस्पररूपश्लेषेणैक्यम्, इति संवन्धस्य रूपम् । Ibid.
4. नन्वेकत्वं अनेकत्वं च परस्परं विरुद्धे, कथम् एकत्र वस्तुनि स्याताम्… । Bhāskarī, Vol. II. p. 35.

Even supposing such an entity exists, it is psychologically not possible to know that it exists.

In reply to the above objections the Ābhāsavādin reminds us that according to him the being of a thing is nothing but its shining or its being reflected in consciousness (provided that the determinate cognition which refers to it is not subsequently contradicted). The categories like relation etc., which are of the nature of unity-in-multiplicity, surely have such a being. Not only that ; in the entire realm of practical life these categories definitely possess causal efficiency. For, purpose is served by that object alone which, being essentially of the nature of relation etc., has both unity and multiplicity. The object which is self-confined never serves any purpose.[1] For instance, when we remember some past pleasure we desire the object which gave pleasure, when we again get that object, we experience satisfaction simply because we get the desired. Now, if that which has been attained is nothing but what has been attained previously, then there could really be no scope for desire ; for the desired is already attained. But, if that which is attained now be different from that which was attained in the past, how could there be any desire for it ? There can be no desire for the unknown. It follows, therefore, that desire is possible only if 'that only' is 'not-that also' and, likewise, 'not-that only' is 'that-also,' Similar would be the case with the means of pleasure also.[2]

1. यदि न कुप्यसि तत् सर्वत्रैव व्यवहारे यत्रापि स्फुटा संबन्धादिधीः न उदेति एवमेव तत्रापि, इति संबन्धादिरूपतया भेदाभेदवान् योऽर्थः तेनैव अर्थक्रिया, न तु स्वात्ममात्रविश्रान्तेन काचिदपि कदाचिदपि अर्थक्रिया···। Ibid. p. 4.

2. ···तथाहि सुखेन स्मर्यमाणेन अभिलाषः, इत्यादि क्रमेण सर्वो व्यवहारः सुखाभासश्च योऽनुभूतः, स एव अभिलष्यते न तु अन्योऽननुभूतः, स एव च यदि प्राप्यते तदभिलषितं प्राप्तं इति तुष्यते, यदि च तत् तदेव तर्हि किं अभिलष्यते-प्राप्तत्वात्, अथ अतदेव तथापि कथं अर्थ्यते-अज्ञातत्वात्, तस्मात् एतत् एवं भवति-यदि तदेव च अतदेव च तदपि च अतदपि च इति। एवं सुखसाधनेषु वाच्यम् । Ibid. p. 61.

Further, if the object of experience is to be destroyed just at the moment of its being experienced, how could there be any desire for it ? Hence, it has to be admitted that in the object, which is only a manifestation or ābhāsa, other manifestations, such as universal or relation etc., are present, though they are not directly perceived.[1] Otherwise, no practical life, whatsoever, could be possible. Therefore, we should not commit the mistake of looking upon the relations as erroneous.[2]

Relation is merely a dependent category of knowledge and is based upon the general category 'unity-in-multiplicity.' Analysis of any experience reveals the universal operation of the general category. While unity is due to the unifying activity of the subject, multiplicity is outside the knowing subject as it is found in the object.[3] Among these unity is more diminant ; for multiplicity is mainly in the unconscious state and arises only in consequence of the separate cognition of two or more things. Though the relation between them is similar to that which holds between an object and its attributes, yet both of them are involved in relation and none of them is sufficient in itself. The experience of unity-in-multiplicity is not immediate but a synthesis of past experiences. It is a mental construction out of the revived residual traces of the past experience. Unity and multiplicity in the same thing are not really

1. "There may be a relation within relation in reference to another object, just as some maintain that in the number etc. inherence is involved. In this case the infinite regress, though it may be there, is not a fault, just as in the case of creations in the preceding and the succeeding 'Kalpas.' For, even if wedo not grasp the creation connected with future, the grasp of the creation connected with the past is not adversely affected." Ibid. Vol. III. p. 136.

2. अन्यथा न कथंचिद्व्यवहार: इति सकलदेशकालदशापुरुषोपयोगी यदि अयं व्यवहारो न सत्य : र्तह् न अन्यस्य सत्यत्वं न विभ्र:-इति न अत्र भ्रान्ति: इति भ्रमितव्यम् । Ibid. II. II. 7.

3. Ibid. II. II. 1-3.

inexplicable. For the universe itself is nothing but unity-in-multiplicity.

The idea of number, measure, separateness, conjunction, etc. are all applications of the special category of relation. Though only one thing is apprehended at a time, yet worldly transactions depend upon the knowledge of relation between different objects. In the absence of consciousness of relation objects would cease to be objects. Relation always holds between two objects. Even when numerous objects are involved in a relation, they can be put into two groups, for all practical purposes, each of which is looked upon as one object, because of its being the object of a single act of apprehension, such as the 'king's man' (rājñah puruṣah). In fact, unity and plurality both depend not on things but on the cognitive activity of the subject. Thus relation involves two external realities. As both the object and the knowing subject are the manifestations of the absolute consciousness, therefore, relation does not end with the finite subject but ultimately rests upon the absolute subject.[1]

Against this, the Vedāntin holds that the relation between Brahman and the world, Real and false, is the examples of all relations. All relations are false ultimately. A relation cannot relate itself to the two terms of which it is a relation ; for no juggler, however well-trained he might be, can dance over his own shoulders. Relation is neither internal, nor external to the terms of relation ; nor is it independent of them. Whatever is relational in our experience is, thus, untrue. Accordingly the entire world of relation is condemned as false in the Vedānta. For, if relation is false then space, time, causality, change and all other categories, which are based upon relation, must equally be false. The doctrine of real transformation or *pariṇāma*, thus, gives way to the doctrine of illusory manifestation or *vivarta* in the Vedānta.

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1. Ibid.

The main dispute between Vedānta and Śaivism, in the field of knowledge, concerns the nature of the subject. All other differences follow from the difference between the two conceptions of the Self. On the assumption that the Self is pure Witness Consciousness, the Vedāntin rigorously rejects all attempts to attribute any quality or power to the Self. This assumption ultimately leads him to a denial of all relational judgements. On the other hand, just because he accepts the Self to be the ultimate subject (*Para Pramātā*) in all knowing and acting, the Śaivite attempts to establish the ultimate dependence of everything upon the Self.

PART III

THE ABSOLUTE REALITY

CHAPTER SIX

THE CONCEPTION OF ABSOLUTE

'I bow to that Absolute which is unity of Parama Śiva and Śakti ; the unity, which from its ultimate state, first of all manifests the pure Ego, 'I', and then through its will divides its powers into two ; the ultimate state, which, being without any manifestation, is self-contained and is responsible for creation and dissolution through the play and suspension respectively of its Powers'[1].

1. Absolutism : A problem

A critical study of absolutism in Indian Philosophy is a difficult task indeed. There are many crucial problems in this field which still remain unsolved.[2] Being confronted with the various theories of Absolute, which have many common points of agreement and disagreement, the student of philosophy finds himself unable to determine the exact relationship between them. As a result of this, the most crucial problem, concerning the nature of identity or difference between various absolutisms, has often been overlooked. Sometimes easy and superficial observations have been made in this context. Thus, it is said that there are no essential differences concerning the nature of Absolute in different systems ; that these systems really belong to the same tradition and express one and the same basic truth in different ways; inspite of differences in their terminology and approach, they aim at the same reality ; the essential nature of the Absolute is identical in all absolutisms.

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1. निराभासात्पूर्णादहमिति पुरा भासयति यद्
द्विशाखामाशास्ते तदनु च विभङ्क्तुं निजकलाम् ।
स्वरूपादुन्मेषप्रसरणनिमेषस्थितिजुषस्-
तदद्वैतं वन्दे परमशिवशक्त्यात्म निखिलम् ॥ Bhaskari Vol. I. P. 1

2. C.P.B,, P. 311

But such attempts do not really go the whole way ; they are merely half-hearted efforts to solve the problem. Though it is true that absolutists agree on various points, it does not mean that they have an identical conception of Absolute. Undoubtedly the areas of agreement deserve wide study, but we should not forget the basic differences. We should not ignore the fact that principles or ideas which mean almost everything to one absolutist, mean nothing or little to the other.[1] It would amount to intellectual dishonesty if we deliberately ignore the differences. Nor can these differences be supposed to be merely formal or verbal. For, how is it that each absolutism indulges in, what seems to be, a serious and sincere refutation of the other ? The tendency to brush aside these attempts at refutation by regarding them as merely superficial or tactical further adds to confusion. As such, these tendencies should be fought and discouraged. In the final analysis, we have to admit that every absolutism, inspite of its similarities with others, has its peculiar characteristics owing to its unique tradition and approach, which provide it an individuality. To overlook this would be to make the confusion worse confounded

While rejecting the view that these absolutisms are essentially identical, at the same time we should also oppose the other extreme view that they are wholly different and disconnected. For, obviously these systems have striking similarities in many respects. We can well admit that there has been mutual influence between them. There is sufficient evidence of living intercourse between them To be influenced is not to borrow or accept ideas from others. If a system stimulates the other to revise or even to reassert its position, it is also a kind of influence. It is probably in this sense that the different absolutisms have influenced each other. Otherwise, it is the inherent dynamism within each system which impelled it to develop in its own way, irrespective of outside influence.[2]

However, it is necessary to find out some way to deter-

1. Murti, T.R.V., 'Buddhism and Vedānta'. 2. Ibid.

mine the relationship between these absolutisms. Such an attempt is of great significance in a comparative study.

In its metaphysical usage the term 'absolute' is quite vague and elusive. According to a recent Encyclopedia, the Absolute is a term used by philosophers to signify the ultimate reality regarded as one and yet as the source of variety; as complete and perfect, and as not divorced from the finite, imperfect world[1]. Every absolutism is infact an *advaitism* or *advayavāda*, a non-dualism. The absolute is the sole and supreme reality in the Mādhyamika, the Yogācāra, the Vedānta, and the Kashmir Śaivism.

Let us try to analyse our problem with the help of an illustration from the Scripture. It says that the one Real is described differently by the learned.[2] This statement suggests that philosophies are nothing but *dṛṣṭis* or views about reality. But reality, being infinite, cannot be limited to any finite view. It can open itself to innumerable views, without being exhausted in them. The differences between the various *dṛṣṭis* arise from the differences in the origin and development of their individual traditions or lines of approach. Different conceptions of absolute are formed in different systems in accordance with their traditional approaches.

The Real, which in itself is beyond all symbols, becomes visualized and expressed through symbols in various approaches. Thus the differences among the various approaches are confined to the realm of symbols The pure advaita, the absolute-in-itself, transcends all visions. Though all visions or approaches refer to the same absolute-in-itself, differences arise when conceptualization takes place. Comparing the Real to the centre of a circle, it might be held that it can equally be reached from the periphery by any of the possible radii. On this analogy, we can also understand why different individuals following different radii feel that their's alone is the right path and those who adopt different radii follow the wrong path. For, from the very nature of the case, the centre

1. *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Vol. I, The Macmillan Co. and the Free Press, Ny, 1967.
2. RV I. 164.46.

appears to him to be nearer than it is to the others. Each votary might see the centre looming ahead of him, but he cannot see that others also may be reaching the centre through their particular mode of approach.[1]

The Absolute-in-itself and the Absolute-for-us

In order to proceed further in our effort to solve the problem, it would be convenient to draw a tentative distinction in the nature of the Absolute. Accordingly we might employ the term 'absolute-in-itself' for the absolute which is beyond all appearances and *dṛṣṭis*, the centre without the radii. The Mādhyamika were the first to emphasise this wholly indeterminate nature of the Absolute. All the absolutists follow the Mādhyamika on this point and hold that the absolute-in-itself is not open to any viewpoint. Silence alone is the appropriate expression for it; *śūnyatā* alone is the proper view of it. In itself it is non-conceptual pure Being, transcending all relations and determinations.

However, differences arise when attempts are made to form a conception of the absolute. When the absolute, which is the whole of reality in-itself, is made the object of a vision, it no longer remains the absolute-in-itself but, instead, becomes the absolute of a particular view, or the absolute of an approach. Henceforth it is no longer the absolute-in-itself but is the absolute-for-us, the centre with a definite radii Obviously, the conception of the absolute (which is always of the absolute-for-us) depends upon the particular mode of approach adopted in a system. Thus, it is here, at the level of conception of the absolute, that the differences between absolutisms become manifest.

While undertaking a critical study of absolutism we may hold fast to one principle, viz. that every absolutism is justified in upholding its own conception of absolute, the absolute-of-its-approach, provided that the approach is throughout consistent. Though it now seems to be an universally arrived conclusion that no philosophy has ever been successful in avoiding

1. CPB., P. 321.

paradox, however the only set of paradox which is objectionable is self-contradiction.[1]

It is also possible to account for similarities or differences between various absolutism in another way. All philosophies originate and develop from experience. The absolute, in principle, represents perfectly all that is of value in experience; value and existence coincide in the absolute. In so far as it represents the entire experience, the absolute has been conceived in somewhat identical terms. But, as all aspects of experience are not preferred equally in various absolutisms, there arise the differences of emphasis and preference. Depending upon the degree of emphasis upon any of the three elements of experience, viz. Will, Knowledge and Feeling, we might broadly classify absolutism into three types. The Mādhyamika and the Vedānta, though differing in their individual modes of approach, both might be regarded as the votaries of cognitive absolute. Both emphasise the cognitive element in experience at the cost of will and feeling and identify the absolute with knowledge. On the other hand, the Śaiva and the Śākta, and in a way the Yogācāra also, emphasise the will aspect of experience and identify the absolute with will. The devotional cult of Vaiṣṇavism, especially as we find it in Meerā and Caitanya, if it is developed on the absolutistic line, would represent the third type of absolutism. Here the feeling or the affective element assumes a central place, while cognitive and conative elements become secondary. Although in each of the three types the absolute-in-itself represents the totality of experience, yet the absolute has been approached in these three types mainly in terms of knowledge, will and feeling, respectively. This is also the reason why each type of absolutism, because of its prior commitment to one of the elements, occupies itself mostly with a detailed analysis of that very element.

A particular viewpoint cannot suit all individuals alike. An approach is adopted by those persons alone who have a

1. Passmore, John., *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*, p. 81, London, 1957.

particular taste and temperament. For example, the 'will absolute' might appeal more to an aristocratic, a chivalrous and an artistic type of man than to others. Similarly, it is also natural that a person of intellectual temperament would remain somewhat cool to it and refuse it with the whole personality. However, the attitude of the aristocratic, the willing heroes of the Goddess, towards the 'thoughtful sons' of the mother is different; according to them the intellectualist can never share the secret riches, boons and the wonderous paradoxical insights which she holds in store only for the devotee.[1]

The above analysis would be helpful in the field of comparative study. Firstly, it shows that every system is ultimately based upon a certain viewpoint or standpoint, which might also be called a postulate or an assumption. Accordingly, the main task of a comparative study would be to determine the nature of the vision or assumption upon which a particular system is based. Secondly, the recognition that metaphysical systems are ultimately based upon certain assumptions also points out the nature and the scope of a comparative study. For, it shows that a critical and comparative study should strictly be confined to determining merely the consistency or inconsistencies of a system. It is not only beyond its competance but also irrelevant for such a study to find out the truth or falsity of a metaphysical system. Every attempt to criticise and question the basic assumption of a system should be opposed and discouraged, simply because it should not, and cannot, be the task of a comparative study. A criticism of the fundamental assumption or vision of a system would be possible only when we adopt a different standpoint. For, to criticise is to employ a standard, and to employ a standard is to adopt or accept a different standard Finally, the present analysis shows that the same absolute reality, the absolute-in-itself, which is identical in all absolutistic experiences, appears to be the 'absolute-for-us' in the realm of thought. In other words, the absolute becomes an absolute (or the absolute of

1. Zimmer, H., *Philosophies of India*, p. 599.

an approach) when it is conceived. In accordance with the different approaches towards reality, different conceptions of absolute are formed. No two absolutism, provided they are consistent in themselves, would have an identical conception of the absolute. Even with regards to the nature of a so-called 'given fact' different absolutism would have different views.

We should be cautious before accepting the apparent similarities between absolutisms as real. Whenever they appear to be similar, they really refer to the 'absolute-in-itself', the absolute beyond all approaches, and not to the 'absolute-for-us', or the absolute of the approaches. Thus, there is near unanimity between various absolutisms on many issues. It is commonly held that the absolute is indeterminate, that the finite process does not affect the absolute, that the manifestation of plurality does not go against unity that the absolute is 'somehow' realized in the finite experience.

The two approaches

We have already noted that the differences in absolutisms arise in the realm of conceptualization, when the absolute is conceived through a particular approach, or when the absolute-in-itself becomes the absolute-for-us. However, the differences in the approaches are closely related to the differences in the valuation of the world. In other words, the nature and formulation of an approach is mostly dependent upon the way in which its votaries treat, or react towards, the given. Thus, the conception of the absolute is determined in accordance with the significance or value of the world. For example, if the attitude towards the world is that of positive affirmation, then the world would be supposed to be a significant manifestation of the nature of the absolute. But, in the cases where negative attitude is adopted, the appearances would be regarded as insignificant *(tuccha)* or false expression of the real nature of the absolute, as constituting limitation of absoluteness The first of these two attitudes are exhibited in the approaches adopted in theistic-voluntaristic absolutisms ; it has been consistently developed in Absolutis-

tic Śaivism. The second attitude is found mostly in the cognitive approaches towards the absolute ; Śūnyavāda and Māyāvāda are the chief illustrations of the negative approach

These two approaches, the positive and negative, may be also called symbolic and non-symbolic. In contrast with the sign, which bears no necessary relation to that to which it points, the symbol participates in the reality of that for which it stands. In the symbolic approach, the absolute is regarded as the all-comprehensive and all-inclusive reality ; here the emphasis is not on what is excluded but on what is included. The world appearances are taken to be the symbols of the absolute. Although in itself the absolute transcends all symbols, yet every symbol might be described as a manifestation of the absolute. For the Śaiva Absolutists the world-appearances are nothing but the various ways in which absolute manifests itself. Against this, in the non-symbolic approach all symbols are dissolved ultimately. It is the aim of reason, which plays a vital role in the non-symbolic approach, to arrive at the state of absolute desymbolization. Determination being negation, the absolute is completely free from all determination. While asserting unity, the votaries of this approach reject multiplicity as unreal.

In the Śaiva Absolutism, the absolute is regarded not merely as *being consciousness* but also as the being which is at the same time self-conscious. The Vedānta Absolute, on the other hand, is pure witness consciousness. However, unlike the Mādhyamika Absolute which does not even have a nature (svarūpa) of its own, the Vedānta Absolute is Being itself. But, according to the Śaiva Absolutists the Vedānta Absolute lacks consciousness. Possession of both being and consciousness constitutes the essential nature of the Śaiva Absolute.

Parama Śiva, the Śaiva Absolute, has been described as the supreme subject *(para pramātā)* in Absolutistic Śaivism. The absolute is that 'knowing which everything else becomes known'. As such, nothing is really rejected or negated in the absolute. Everything in the world, every appearance, is a real manifestation of the absolute. The widening or

expansion of finite vision is the chief characteristic of the process towards the realization of the absolute ; wider and expanded the vision, nearer the absolute we arrive ; narrower the vision, more removed from the absolute we are. This Śaiva approach might be des ribed as an *integral* approach, and the absolute also might be described as the *integral Reality*. Contradictions and conflicts are neither avoided nor rejected, but are resolved in the integral absolute. There is greater emphasis upon the negation of separateness than upon the negation of duality or difference. Unity or integrality alone is supposed to be the test of reality. Separateness or discord, likewise, is the test of unreality. In so far as they appear separate from each other, appearances are false ; they are, however, real in so far as they manifest unity. In reality, the one is All and the All is One.

The Vedāntic approach is 'from the unreal to the real'. Illusion is the datum for Vedānta Philosophy.[1] By their very nature, the appearances are unreal and cannot constitute reality. This awareness of illusion and the spirit of rejection is fundamental to the Vedānta. The absoluteness of Brahman is established through the negation of the world. The three essential characteristics of Brahman, Being (*sat*), Consciousness (*cit*) and Bliss (*ānanda*), are also established by showing the unreality (*mithyātva*), materiality (*jadatva*) and finitude (*paricchinatva*) of the world. Appearances, which belong to the sphere of change, can in no way be related to Brahman, which is pure Being. That which appears is ultimately false ; the real is that which never appears. The more stronger and comprehensive the rejection of appearances, the more closer to the absolute we become. As they are disowned in their own locus, the reality of the appearances can be asserted only as the being of the locus itself. The absolute being known everything becomes known, because the absolute is the true

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1. Murti, TRV., *The two definitions of Brahman in the Advaita*, pp. 136-7.

reality of everything. The central feature of the Vedānta approach consists in its emphasis upon the purity of Being. Accordingly, the Vedānta absolute can be characterised as *Śuddha* or pure absolute. That alone can be real which never deviates from its essential nature. Except Brahman, nothing else can have this nature. In reality, there is nothing independent of the Self.[1]

There is another way in which the two approaches differ from each other. Whereas the Śaiva approach develops mostly as a demand of religious consciousness, the Vedānta approach is largely governed by philosophical awareness. While philosophy is born of a rational inquiry, religion is born out of the concrete situation, the situation of 'involvement.' Reason is the supreme master in philosophy; faith is the guide in the sphere of religion. Philosophy satisfies our mind, religion our heart; while philosopher reasons and argues, the man of faith believes and acts, lives and loves.[2] In religion the contradictions of reason, which disturb the philosopher greatly, are simply resolved in the harmony of feeling. Whereas the believer insists that there are no contradictions in reality, the 'thinker breaks his head' with contradictions. By a sheer act of faith the believer passes beyond all conflicts and solves all problems of life.

The religious symbol, in which we pass from the visible to the invisible, involves a *leap*. And because it is symbolic and involves a leap, religion gives rise to the demand that it should be explained non-symbolically. This is done by philosophy whose task is mostly negative, of removing the symbolic coverings from the truth gained by religion. But philosophy does not, and cannot, make the discovery of

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1. यद्रूपेण यन्निश्चित तद्रूपं न व्यभिचरति।…न हि आत्मनो अन्यत् तत्प्रविभक्त देशकालभूतवत् भविष्यद्वा वस्तु विद्यते। SB. 2.1.6.
2. Radhakrishna, S., *Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, p. 6-22.

the invisible. Without the discovery of the Noumena, made by religion, philosophy would remain empty, a vacuous play of the dialectic[1].

The essential difference between Philosophical and Religious approaches lies in the fact that while there is a greater emphasis upon logical consistency in the former, there is an immediate or spontaneous awareness of facts, without much regards to the demand of logic or language, in the latter approach. The main aim of the religious approach is 'somehow' to establish the absoluteness of God *(Īśvara-dvayavāda)*. This approach develops as theistic absolutism in which the absolute is realized as the home of all values. The absolute represents in its supreme perfection everything that is of worth in human life. In the philosophical approach, on the other hand, there is a completely disinterested 'search' for truth, regardless of the fact whether it satisfies our emotion or not. Here, reason is the supreme master and guide who mercilessly rejects all that is inconsistent and illogical.

However, it does not mean that an approach is wholly and purely religious or philosophical. Nor does it mean that the religious approach is necessarily against reason and the philosophical approach is opposed to faith. The fact is that there can be no separation between philosophy and Religion. Philosophy has never completely divorced itself from religion in India. Similarly religion also has always resorted to philosophical method.[2] Reason without faith would be mere logical jugglery. Philosophy has impact upon life, it is to be lived in life. It affects our behaviour and outlook fundamentally. Religion also cannot be devoid of reason. Just as true philosophy always results in true religion, religion in its deepest aspect is philosophical. For there can be no ultimate conflict between reason

1. Murti, T. R. V., *Some Thoughts on the Indian Philosophy of Language* Presidential address, 37th Session of Indian Philosophical Congress.
2. 'If Philosophy would be empty without the discovery of the Noumena, religion also will be blind without philosophical appraisal and critical alertness'.
Murti, T. R. V., Ibid.

and faith. Unlike the Mādhyamika, which represents a purely philosophical approach, the Vedānta is also a religious approach. It is a synthesis of religion and philosophy. It gives an inferior place to devotion or feeling than knowledge. As *Jñāna* is superior to *bhakti* in it, the Vedānta might be described as the path of knowledge, *Jñāna mārga*. According to the Vedānta the unqualified Brahman assumes qualified form, or appears as qualified, for the sake of devotion and worship[1]. But ultimately all appearances are false The wise always reasons about reality, saying 'not-this', 'not-this' . On the other hand, the devotee or the *bhakta* accepts all states of consciousness as real. For him everything is a real manifestation of the divinity.

The absolute-in-itself in the two approaches

It is difficult to determine the nature of the 'absolute-in-itself' in the two approaches. Any discussion regarding the nature of 'absolute-in-itself' would appear to be self-contradictory. For, the 'absolute-in-itself' transcends all determination. The moment it becomes an object of thought it no longer remains the 'absolute-in-itself' but becomes the 'absolute-for-us'. As far as the 'absolute-in-itself' is concerned, silence alone is the proper language. However, it would be clear on second thought that a distinction between the relational and the non-relational aspects of the absolute is presupposed in every absolutism[2]. The distinction is found in all approaches and has to be accepted as long as we discuss the problem. The reference to the non-relational and non-empirical nature of the absolute is actually a reference to

1. SB, I. 9.24.
2. 'In speaking of the absolute and its knowledge it is rather difficult to avoid slight inconsistencies ; for thought is always relational. The only solution is to make clear distinctions as far as possible, and stick fast to them, though all such distinctions are ultimately purely tentative, they have no claim in the end to be real. These distinctions may give rise to apparent inconsistencies, but the other alternative, devotion of them, may create intolerable confusion. Kaufman, W., '*Critique of Philosophy and Religion* p. 103, London, 1958.

the 'absolute-in-itself'. Almost identical views are held with regards to this nature of the absolute in different absolutisms. As soon as attempts are made to conceive or communicate the absolute differences in views arise.

The absolute that is approached is the absolute in relation to us ; it is that aspect of the absolute which faces creation. The other aspect of the absolute, which transcends creation, can be known only by becoming the absolute. The absolute, in the Śaiva approach, eternally performs the five-fold function of creation, sustenance, etc. Accordingly, from the point of view of the creature, the absolute is essentially the supreme Lord (*Maheśvara*). We have to postulate the relation of identity between the invisible and visible aspects of the absolute. The *Śūnyatva* and *Māheśvaratva* both are integral and inseparable aspects, the transcendent and immanent faces of the same absolute. They are distinguished only in the realm of thought. In reality the absolute is both transcendent and immanent, at the same time. Because of his concern for establishing the absolutism of God, the Śaivite makes repeated use of such terms and concepts which best serve this purpose. Terms like *spanda, sphuraṇa, svātantrya māheśvarya, Caitanya* etc. easily bring out the creative or free characteristic of consciousness, or the dynamism and absoluteness of being.

On the other hand, the Vedāntin is more concerned with the absolute-in-itself, which transcends all relations and empirical determinations. Though the absolute might also be described as the ultimate cause, the creator and sustainer of the world, as long as we are approaching it through the appearances, ultimately all relations are false. The absolute appears as the great Lord (*Maheśvara)* only in relation to us. Ultimately the lordship or the creatorship of the absolute is as false as the world.

Both, the Śaivite and the Vedāntin hold that as the absolute is beyond the grasp of thought, it can be realized only intuitively. The Śaivite describes the absolute-in-itself as *anuttara*. In itself the absolute is *anuttara* as there can be no

question or answer with regard to it. It cannot be described as 'this' or 'that' as mind is unable to reach it. Being the highest reality, it is free from all limitation. And even when it is realized intuitively words cannot be successfully used in conveying or expressing its nature[1]. In the Vedānta approach, Brahman also has been described almost in similar terms. The Vedāntin brings out, with equal force, the utter transcendence of Brahman.

However, inspite of some apparent similarities between the two approaches, their conceptions of absolute are quite different. *Anuttara*, the non-relational absolute, is in fact the absolute unity, the perfect equilibrium (*sāmarasya*) of Śiva and Śakti, or being and becoming. The manifestables or relations are not absolutely negated or annuled but are merged in its supreme unity. Hence, it is neither describable by our negations, *neti, neti*, for we cannot limit it by saying it is not this, it is not that,—nor by our affirmations, for we cannot fix it by saying, it is this, it is that, *iti, iti*[2]. There may be innumerable visions of the absolute, and each might be regarded as true expression of the absolute, which is All, the perfect integrality of everything actual or possible.

In contrast to this, according to the Vedānta Brahman transcends thought and appearances alike. But transcendence of Brahman does not mean integrality or fullness of being. Transcendence really means that it is pure being, or being itself. Appearances do not find any place, in any form, in it.

But the Śaiva absolutist finds it difficult to reconcile transcendence with immanence. He regards the absolute as transcendent and yet 'somehow' immanent within the world. If it were merely transcendent, it would be as good as nothing for us ; we need not, and cannot, speak about it. But if it is immanent, it becomes relational and its absoluteness becomes compromised. Here, the Vedānta Absolutist faces a special problem, viz. if the world were not integral to Brahman,

1. Pandey, K. C., Op. cit. pp. 484-92.
2. Sri Aurobindo, *Life Divine* p. 292, Sri Aurobindo Library, New York, 1951.

how could Brahman be defined ? The Vedāntin tries to solve the problem by holding that it is not necessary that the definition must be a real property of the definitum to serve as a mark of distinction. Even an assumed mark can well serve the purpose. For instance, the branch of a tree might indicate the location of the moon, without really belonging to it. Similarly, the crow perching on the house top does serve, sometimes, as a mark to single out a particular house from other houses, without constituting a permanent feature of it. Likewise the world also might be taken to be the indicative of Brahman without being constitutive of it.

The Śaiva Absolutists do not subscribe to 'the view that transcendence of absolute necessarily implies a complete rejection of appearances. Parama Śiva is both transcendent and immanent, at the same time. Transcendence, in the Śaiva view, need not imply cancellation of finitude. The absolute would no longer be absolute if anything were excluded from it. Its absoluteness does not consist in the rejection of the finite and relative ; on the contrary, its absoluteness indicates supreme or perfect inclusion or integration of all finitude and relativity. In its embrace, everything is truly preserved. The fact is that transcendence as such is not a separate state of the absolute. Any distinction between transcendence and immanence can be possible only from the phenomenal standpoint, otherwise the absolute cannot be described in any way, not even as *Śūnyatā*.

The Śaivite holds that, from his point of view, the absolute *(Saṁvid)* always appears as knower, known and knowing, in the four states of manifestation, creation, sustenance, etc[1]. Accordingly it has to be assumed that even in the state of pure transcendence the appearances are not reduced to total non-existence. They continue to have existence, in the form of oneness with the absolute consciousness, during this state also. 'As the great Banyan tree lies only in the form of potency in the seed, even so the entire

1. . . पारमार्थिकी संवित् सृष्टिस्थितिसंहारानाख्यत्वेन चतुर्विधं रूपमाश्रित्य प्रमातरि प्रमाणे प्रमेये च सर्वदा भाति . . . । T. A. IV. 125.

universe with all the mobile and immobile beings lies as a potency in the heart of the supreme'[1]. Just as a peacock with all its variegated plumage lies as a mere potency in the plasma of its egg, even so the entire universe lies in the womb of consciousness. Though the absolute transcends thought, it is also expressed through thought ; it is both transcendent and immanent. That which is 'beyond', the same is 'here' ; that which is 'here', the same is 'there'. Like the sun which transcends its rays and also becomes manifest through them, the absolute transcends the world and also manifests itself through the world.

On the contrary, the Vedāntin insists that if the appearances lose all their determinate characteristics in the state of absolute unity, there is no ground to assert their existence in the Transcendent. Even if the appearances are supposed to be there, we atleast do not have any means of determining their existence or presence in the absolute-in-itself. Those who hold the view that the appearances have some kind of potential existence would have to face the hard task of explaining the relationship between potentiality and actuality, substance and attribute, unity and multiplicity, and so on. Nor does the supposition that the appearances continue to exist as identical with Divine Power of manifestation lead us anywhere. For, in no case is it possible to reconcile absolute unity with difference. The Vedāntin, therefore, holds that the reality of the appearances is opposed to the reality of the absolute. Brahman and world are not two equal realities, but Brahman is the reality of the world. From our point of view, there can be no passage from the Real to the unreal; progression is always from appearances to reality.

Transcendence of Brahman does not mean its otherness. Brahman alone is the self of everything. Nor can it be held that Brahman has two aspects, an immanent and a transcendent aspect. It is immanent in the sense that it is the

1. यथा न्याग्रोधबीजस्थ: शक्तिरूपो महाद्रुम:
तथा हृदयबीजस्थ विश्वमेतच्चराचरम् । Quoted by Kshemaraja in his *Parā Prabodhikā*.

world; apart from Brahman the world has no existence. Being the subject of every judgement, Brahman is denoted by every term. It has been described as the indescribable, spoken of as the unspeakable. Brahman alone is the reality in all appearances. Even the 'this', in the judgement 'this is snake', is false in so far as it appears as the snake. Brahman as the *ādhāra* has more phenomenality than Brahman as *adhisthānā*, which is wholly transcendent to the phenomena.

The above mentioned differences in the conception of absolute arise mainly from the basically different approaches in the two systems. Although there are many points of agreement between them as regards the pure non-dual character of the absolute, there are fundamental differences between them regarding the nature of transcendence. In the Śaiva Absolutism, transcendence does not mean total rejection of appearances. It does not accept the view of absolutely new creation, nor the view of absolute destruction. In the Vedānta Absolutism, on the contrary, this very standpoint leads to an opposite conclusion. Precisely because there can be no new creation, there is no real creation ; all creation is false. There can be no appearance of absolute ; all appearances are illusory or false (i.e. *vivarta)*. The Real has nothing to do with the appearances.

2. Absolute and Reason

Here, the question arises that in our attempt to determine the nature of absolute, how far is it possible to rely on our intellect ? To what extent is it significant in determining the nature of the absolute ? In other words, it amounts to a demand to know the place or role of reason in the constitution of the absolute. Does the absolute wholly exclude reason ? Or, is it merely rational ? Further, is there anything else than reason, such as will or feeling, etc., which can also successfully convey the nature of absolute ?

Reasoning or *tarka* itself is not included among the *Pramāṇas* in Indian philosophy. It is supposed to function merely as an auxiliary of the *Pramāṇas*, and as an auxiliary

alone does it contribute to the production of knowledge. Independent of the *Pramāṇa*, reasoning cannot establish the existence or non-existence of anything. Moreover, there is no universal agreement as regards the conclusion derived from reasoning What one logician establishes as valid knowledge, the same is contradicted by another of superior merit; the conclusions of the second logician are refuted by the third, and so on. Nor is it possible to gather at the same time and place all the logicians, past, present and future, to arrive at universal agreement[1]. In fact, reasoning does not lead us far. It proves to be inconclusive in the end.

The tragedy of reason, as Bradley pointed out, is that it artificially divides experience and, holding apart these artificially divided aspects the 'content' from the 'form', the 'what' from the 'that', attempts somehow to understand the whole of experience. Being essentially relational, it cannot give us the knowledge of the absolute, which transcends relations. The absolute includes whole of experience, but reason stands for one aspect of experience alone. Intellectual or cognitive experience is not the whole experience. And, simply because the absolute is not completely open to intellectual knowledge it cannot be held that the absolute is as good as nothing. It only shows that reason is not fully competent to reveal the nature of reality. Being the whole of reality, the absolute cannot become an object of thinking or knowing. Thought cannot fully express the experience of feeling or willing[2]. In order to know Brahman one has to become Brahman. As Brahman is not reason alone, therefore, complete experience of Brahman would imply a realization of all elements of experience, reason constituting only one element in it. Thus, reason, in order to be competent to give us knowledge of reality, has to be corrected and supplemented by other aspects of experience.

1. S. B. II. I. 11.
2. 'I do not know what I feel ; the more deeply and intensely I feel, the less I know What I feel. If I have words for it, adequate words, the feeling is not deep and intense; if I have no words for it, I myself do not know what I feel.' Kaufman, op. cit; p. 120

Similarly, no pramāṇa, whether individually or collectively, can wholly reveal the existence and nature of the absolute, the ultimate subject, which manifests all Pramāṇas. It is only the particular, which is a modification, that can be defined ; Brahman, which is not a modification, cannot be defined[1]. Brahman is beyond the reach of mind and speech and is different from the known and unknown. The known is the manifest differentiated into names and forms ; the unknown is the manifest nescience, the root of the manifest[2].

It has been distinctly stated in the Vedānta Sutras that reason should be taken as subordinate auxillary to intuitional knowledge contained in the scriptures[3]. Whereas reasoning proceeds from characteristic marks, it is difficult to say that Brahman is characterised by this or that attribute, or else we would be limiting the absolute[4]. Hence there can be no inferential knowledge of Brahman. However, the main difficulty as regards the possibility of an inferential knowledge of Brahman is that inference is purely a formal process. One can start from anything and argue to anything else one likes without any necessity for the conclusion being true[5].

All attempts of reason to know the knower are bound to fail. There can be no knowledge of the knower other than that revealed by the absolute itself. Those who try to establish the existence of Brahman do not really bring it into being. And if proving means revealing, then also it is of no use in the case of absolute light. There can be proving or disproving of the Supreme Lord, who is essentially Omnipotent, Omniscient and Eternal. As the entire universe is merely a manifestation of the absolute, therefore, what kind of subject, with what means of knowledge, regarding what kind of Lord, can advance proof or disproof leading to the knowledge of His being or not-being ? Infact, ultimately the knowing subject,

1. Śaṁkara's commentary on Tait. up. II. 6-7
2. S. B. I. 4
3. SB II. I. 6,11.
4. Gauḍpāda Kārikā, III. 26.
5. Sastri, S. S., 'Critical Idealism and the Advaita Vedānta'—A comparison of Methods,—Mysore University Journal.

the object and the means of knoweldge are not different from the absolute[1]. Thus, any attempt to prove the supreme would be like the attempt to put one's foot over one's own shadow or like dancing over one's own shoulders[2].

Brahman can only be known through the traditionally handed down teachings of the *ācāryas* and not through reasoning, eloquence, deep learning, ascetic practices or sacrifice. In fact, there can be no proper 'hearing', *śravaṇa*, of the holy texts without the association with a Guru. Scripture is the only proper recourse to us, when all other resources fail, as regards the knowledge of the absolute. Nor is it proper to say that, besides *Śruti*, other pramāṇas may also apply to Brahman because it is existent. For, being devoid of colour, form, etc., Brahman cannot become an object of perception. It is also not amenable to inference etc. because of its not having any characteristic mark. Like duty it is to be known solely through the scripture[3], or revelation, which is the knowledge revealed to the seer and the prophet during the moments of highest exaltation.

As opposed to finite reason, divine revelation might be described as 'the logic of the infinite.' An exalted place is given to the 'logic of the infinite' in both the Vedānta and Śaiva Absolutisms. It is the light which enables us to transcend the barriers of finite logic which otherwise leads to skepticism and agnosticism. The Vedāntins, like Vācaspati, go to the extent of holding that only the Scriptural revelation is to be relied on; it is undoubtedly surer and stronger than perception.[4] Revelation gives us the original truth; reason only works upon the truths provided by revelation. Intuition or insight first leads us to hold beliefs, which are confirmed or refuted by subsequent reasoning. The fact is that reasoning is merely a harmonising and controlling force, and not a creative one.[5]

1. Bhāskarī, vol. I, p. 47-56.
2. P. H. pp. 36-7.
3. SB. II. 1. 6.
4. *Siddhāntaleśa Saṁgraha*, p. 280-1, Chowkhamba ed.
5. Russell, B., *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 13.

But Scriptures do not come in conflict with other sources of knowledge. They provide us knowledge of the non-empirical. Though the absolute is not known by any other Pramāṇa except revelation, the revelatory knowledge is supplemented by all other means of knowledge. 'The inquiry into Brahman, unlike the inquiry into Dharma, admits of other Pramāṇas besides Scripture, and all other Pramāṇas are to be used according to the occasion.'[1] Śruti is neither opposed to reason, nor does it render reason useless. On the contrary, reason occupies a very important place even within the sphere of Śruti Though reasoning becomes superfluous with regards to the truth which has been categorically and finally taught in the scriptures, it would not be so in the cases where doubts arise in the inquiring minds Revealed truths appear quite strange and unbelievable and are not easily accepted by the mind. Hence the use of reasoning is necessary in order to remove doubts regarding knowledge given by the Scriptures. Further, reasoning also connects the teachings of the scriptures with the experience of our daily life and thus enables us to gain an insightful knowledge of the revealed truth.[2] Advaitism, which is originally accepted on the authority of revelation, can also be demonstrated by reason.[3] The Vedāntin, therefore, shows how the advaita can be demonstrated by reason. The Lord whom we know from the tradition, possesses the powers of knowledge and action ; even if he be not known as such from tradition, he has to be admitted as such from reason.[4] Reasoning is also useful in clearing the apparent contradiction between one revelation and another. The value and importance of reasoning in ascertaining the correct sense of revelation has been widely accepted.[5] However, we should not over-

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1. न धर्मजिज्ञासायामिव श्रुत्यादय एव प्रमाणं ब्रह्मजिज्ञासायां, किन्तु श्रुत्यादयोऽनुभवादयश्च यथासम्भवमिह प्रमाणम् । SB. I. I. 2.
2. Śaṁkara's Commentary on Bṛh. Up. IV. III. 21.
3. Śaṁkara's Commentary on Gauḍapāda Kārikā III.
4. IPV. I, I. 3.
5. Śaṁkara's Commentary on Bṛh. Up. III. 9. 7.

look the fact that reasoning becomes effective only in so far as it subserves true revelation [1]

It is often held that belief in revelation is essentially dogmatic. For, though we might assign an important place to reason, the final court of appeal is revelation and not reason. How do we know that a given revelation is true or false ? Various criteria by which we can differentiate between a true revelation and a false one have been mentioned. But none of these can be regarded as a necessary or sufficient criterion.[2] Nor can the validity of revelation be established on the basis of miracles. For, if miracle be supposed to be something utterly improbable, it is quite likely that our senses might have deceived us. Further, there is no universal agreement about miracles ; what appears to be a miracle to one individual need not be so to the other. In short, appeal to miracle is circular. A miracle requires faith; to those who lack faith it is not a miracle.[3]

It is the age old problem of Faith versus Reason. Hemacuḍā expressed similar doubts to his wife Hemalekhā[4] : one should no doubt have faith in words of the wise, but then, one can have faith only when one had some grounds for it. How can one have faith without being convinced of the results ?

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1. श्रुत्येव च सहायत्वेन तर्कस्य अभ्युपेतत्वात् । SB. I. I. 2.
2. As Kaufman asks, what is the criteria by which to differentiate between a true revelation and a false one ? Five criteria have been mentioned; subjective certainty, it would sanction every fanaticism ; the result, but it presupposes a value standard by which to judge the result ; it must not conflict with any accepted tradition, but great religious figures have generally always opposed the tradition ; St. Thomas, Paul Tillich etc. held that it should not be opposed to reason, but it leaves room for a multitude of sins ; it must not be explainable in wholly naturalistic terms, but even ordinary vision, hearing or dream, is not wholly explainable naturalistically. Kaufman, op. cit., pp. 89-92.
3. Kaufman, op. cit.
4. *Tripurā Rahasya, Jñāna kānda*, chapter VI.

In order to remove the doubts of her husband, Hemalekhā said that faith is essential in life. A person is able to communicate with the other only because he believes the other. If we give up faith completely, we would either think absurdly or we would cease to think about the truth. To bring it home to her husband, she narrates the story of a disciple of the sage Kauśika, named Sunga. Sunga was a master of argumentation and held that since truth is that which is probable on some logical grounds this very proposition is not probable by any logic, because any reason which proves this, if they are defective, is untrue. Hence one should first of all try to prove whether the grounds themselve are free from defects or not and in order to prove the ground of this ground, one must have some other ground to prove the truth of this. Thus it will lead to an infinite regress. It is not even possible to determine the nature of the knower, known and the instrument of knowing. So all this that is seen is phantasmal appearance or nothingness, and even this nothingness is nothing, because it is not possible to prove it by any logical reason. Hence everything is nothingness.

The final criterion of truth is neither reason, nor revelation, but one's own intuitive experience.[1] Truth cannot be grasped wholly through intellect; it has to be realized in one's own experience. Mere intellectual knowledge would not lead to a realization of truth, unless it is accompanied by direct personal experience. Revelation or Śruti, in itself, is not sufficient. Ultimately both reason and revelation turn out to be merely subsidiary aid to the realization of truth. In the end both must be transcended in order to have direct experience.[2] Just as reason requires the guidance of revelation, revelation also depends upon reason for clarification of its true meaning. Finally, however, both reason and revelation become meaningful only when experience takes place. It is misleading to renounce all revelation. But it is even more misleading to reject all reason and

1. Hiriyana, M., *Studies in Indian Philosophy*, vol. I, P. 49.
2. SB I. II. 2

experience and accept revelation alone. And as there can be no real opposition between reason and revelation, both can be accepted as subsidiary to experience. When the import of Scriptures is not clear, it can be understood in accordance with every day experience.[1] For, not even a hundred texts which declare fire to be cold and devoid of light can be acceptable; not even a hundred texts can force things to abandon their nature.[2] Opposition to seen is, in fact, what no thinker has ever vouched.[3] Nor is it the aim of Scriptures to distort the true nature of things. No amount of reasoning or illustration can prove a thing to be of a different nature than its own, e. g. that the sun gives no heat or that the fire is cold, for other *pramāṇas* represent these objects to be different in nature. Nor is one *pramāṇa* contradicted by another *pramāṇa*. The Scriptures also cannot make the unknown known without using words in the sense in which they are used in the world.[4]

Here, it might be asked that if we refuse to accept the authority of the Scripture in some matters, how can we accept its authority in the case of Brahman ? In reply to this, Śaṁkara holds that there is the possibility of the Scriptural statement being contradicted in the case of knowledge within experience. But there can be no possibility of contradiction arising in the case of Brahman, where there is no avidyā. The knowledge of the finite is always conditional. But the knowledge of Brahman, which, ex-hypothesi, excludes the possibility of correction, is not conditional.[5]

The Śaiva and the Vedānta absolutists interprete the role or significance of revelation in their own ways. While both of them attempt to resolve the contradictions of reason

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1. Ibid. IV, 1.5
2. न हि श्रुतिशतमपि शीतोऽग्निरप्रकाशोऽवेति ब्रुवत्प्रामाण्यमुपैति ।
   Śaṁkara's Commentary on Gītā, XVIII. 66
3. न च दृष्टविरोधः केनचिदप्यभ्युपगम्यते । Śaṁkara on Bṛh. Up. I 4.10
4. Ibid. II. I. 10.
5. Śaṁkara's Commentary on Gītā, XVIII. 66.

through an appeal to revelation, their motives for this are fundamentally different. The Śaivite, through an appeal to Śruti, aims at overcoming the conflicts of thought. According to him the conflicts exist only in the realm of finite thought. There are no conflicts or contradictions in the 'logic of the Infinite.' Śruti helps us in understanding the true nature of the world which is a manifestation (ābhāsa) of the Lord himself. On the other hand, the chief aim of the Vedāntin is to establish, through an appeal to Śruti, the ultimate illusoriness of the world. For him the real function of knowledge is negative; when knowledge dawns, appearances vanish. The absolute is not to be known as qualified or disqualified by the manifold of effects. The teaching of the Scripture, on the contrary, is that having dissolved through knowledge the world effects produced by Nescience, we should seek to know Brahman, the immutable receptacle of all [1] Thus the Vedāntin tries to bring out the central purport of Upaniṣads, and also other texts, upholding a fullfledged acosmic thesis. His acceptance of Scripture really amounts to a denial of it. Ultimately the *Śruti* also has to be discarded; for what the *Śruti* and other pramāṇas deal with are merely products of nescience.[2] The aim of the *Śāstra* is the removal of all distinctions created by *avidyā*; its purport is not to represent Brahman as 'this' or 'that' object.[3] The sole fruit of knowledge is removal of the obstacle lying in the way of freedom.[4] The fruition of the Pramāṇas consists in producing knowledge which also involves their negation or annulment.

In the Śaiva Absolutism, the *Śāstras* are regarded as real manifestation of the *Parā Vāk*, the transcendental speech. They are the valid means of knowledge revealed by the highest Lord Himself.[5] They represent the knowledge which

1. न कार्यंप्रपञ्चविशिष्टे विचित्र आत्मा विज्ञेय··· । SB I. III. 1.
2. अविद्यावद्विषयाणि प्रत्यक्षादिप्रमाणानि । SB. Intr.
3. अविद्याकल्पितभेदनिवृत्ति··· । Ibid
4. मोक्षप्रतिबन्धनिवृत्तिमात्रमेव आत्मज्ञानस्य फलम् । Ibid.
5. शास्त्रं च परमेश्वरभावितमेव प्रमाणम् । T.S. P. 4

descends from the level of the absolute consciousness to the level of the finite. From another point of view, they stand for the universe as originating from the transcendental speech. In its original state the universe consisted of the *Parā Vāk*, which is Pūrṇa Ahaṁtā or absolute self-cosciousness. When creation takes place these *Śāstras* are gradually manifest in the form of *Paśyantī*, *Madhyamā* and *Vaikharī*. *Paśyantī*, the first form, is the vision of the entire universe in an undifferentiated form. Later it assumes the form of the *Madhyamā*, which is a state between the undifferentiated and the differentiated vision of the universe. The Vaikharī state stands for the grossified form of the universe. The various Śāstras, as they are now with us, are nothing but the divine Madhyamā assuming these forms and 'flowing out' as the Vaikharī in the five streams representing the five faces of Śiva, called Iśāna, Tatpuruṣa, Sadyojāta, Aghora and Vāma. These faces represent five aspects of absolute Power, viz. *cit*, *ānanda*, *icchā*, *jñāna* and *kriyā*.[1] Thus it is the Parama Śiva himself who appears in the form of *Śāstras*. They bring to our notice His powers of knowledge, will and action and remove the wrong idea about His true nature.[2]

It is mostly because of this difference in their interpretations of the role of the Śāstras that there arises a significant difference in the 'methodology' of the two systems. The integral method of approach finds great favour in the Saiva Absolutism. This method proves to be universally comprehensive and all embracing. Here sense-perception, inference, reason, testimony and all other resources of knowledge are fully utilised in establishing the absoluteness of God. Contradictions or conflicts do not cause much inconvenience to the integralists. The absolute being the ultimate subject of all predication, every negation or limitation and every contradiction or conflict really belongs to the absolute. And in belonging to the absolute these negations etc. are not cancelled or rejected, but are harmonised or synthesised in *sāmarasya* or absolute integrality.

1. Chatterjee, J. C., *Kashmir Śaivism*, pp. 3-6.
2. IPV. I. 1. 3.

As such they are to be regarded as manifestation of integral unity. The Vedāntin, on the other hand, adopts the well known method of 'double negation.'

3. The two Negations

A brief mention of the criticism by Śaiva Absolutists of some opponent's views about ultimate reality might help us in understanding the Śaiva conception of the absolute. It would enable us to see how through the refutation of the opposite views the Śaiva Absolutist develops his own theory of reality. For every system is determined not only by the positive content which it attempts to express, but also by the views it wishes to oppose.[1] Abhinava Gupta tells us that the absolute reality, as conceived in his system, is made quite clear if the opposite views are first postulated and then refuted.[2]

Since the Sāṁkhya bifurcation of the real, the Supreme Person, into two separate realities through its postulation of Puruṣa and Prakṛti—the eternal *being* and eternal *becoming* (*Kūṭastha Nitya* and *Pariṇāmī Nitya*)— entire Indian thinking has been overshadowed by dualistic tendencies. Unfortunately, many systems have assumed, directly or indirectly, the reality of this division. Moreover, as these systems were unable to bridge the gulf between Puruṣa and Prakṛti, they took the desperate step of solving the problem by a shortcut method, viz., the method of negation. It appeared to them that they could bridge the gulf only if they reject one of the dualities. It is this very attitude of rejection or negation which has sundered human experience into two parts, Jīva and Ajīva or *cetana* and *jaḍa*. This very attitude is responsible for the discrimination between *Saṁsāra* and *Nirvāṇa*, Brahman and Māyā.[3]

Accordingly, some systems accepted the reality of the pure Witness Consciousness (Puruṣa) and denied the reality

1. Radhakrishnan, S., *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 473.
2. Bhāskarī, Vol. I, p. 82.
3. Zimmer, op. cit., p. 595-6.

of Prakṛti. Other systems, on the other hand, adopted the path of expounding the sole reality of pure *becoming*, the eternal nature, and rejected the eternal spirit as illusory. For, as Sri Aurobindo says, if we assert only pure spirit and a mechanical unintelligent substance or energy, the inevitable result would be that we shall either deny the spirit or turn away from nature. Thought comes to deny the former as an illusion of the imagination or the latter as the illusion of the senses.[1] Thus, stemming separately from either Puruṣa or Prakṛti vision two extreme lines of thought have developed in Indian Philosophy. Each line develops by refuting or rejecting the other. Yet, in the end none could succeed in bridging the gulf which has been artificially created in the Sāṁkhya. Out of the vision of the *eternal* (*Nitya*) develops the *Ātmavāda* of the Vedānta according to which Ātman, the being eternal, alone is real and the world of becoming is only apparently real. In this way, the *ātman* or Puruṣa vision culminated in the theory called Māyāvāda. On the other hand, the Prakṛti vision develops in the Buddhist doctrine of no-soul (*Anātmavāda*), according to which ātman or spirit is an illusion of the imagination. This view inevitably leads to the doctrine of void, *Śūnyavāda*, in Mādhyamika Buddhism.

However, side by side with these negative approaches, there was developing a positive approach in Indian thought which affirms the reality of both nature and spirit and denies the duality strongly.[2] In the Śaiva vision of reality such negative attitudes arise from narrow and sectarian views of reality. In a proper course of development thought, after having drawn a preliminary distinction between Puruṣa and Prakṛti, should rise to the conception of supreme unity in the end. Although to begin with, our understanding may form a conception of duality, yet it

1. *Life Divine*, p. 9.
2. "Yet, there flourished in India, side by side with this attitude of negation, a vigorous affirmation of the world of flux and time, which is as fearless and absolute, in its own way, as the unflinching self-transcendence of the Yogis."—Zimmer, op. cit.

should aim at attaining the absolute non-duality.[1] The fact that Abhinava Gupta bases the *Paramārthasāra*, one of his important works, on the foundations laid down by Sāṁkhya and admits that the work originally belongs to Kapila, the founder of the Sāṁkhya system, clearly shows the importance of Sāṁkhya dualism in the development of integral absolutism.

The negation of the Anatmavadins

The term '*anātmavāda*' in the present work has been used for those theories in which the reality of the phenomenal world alone is accepted and the reality of self or spirit is denied. We may regard Materialism and Buddhism as important types of *anātmavāda*. The term '*ātmavāda*' has been employed to express the doctrine in which the phenomenal world is regarded as unreal and the spirit alone is accepted as ultimately real. We have used this term exclusively for the Advaita Vedānta.[2]

The Śaiva absolutist disagrees with the materialist, who regards matter alone to be ultimately real. Monism of matter is self-contradictory. In order to prove or disprove a particular view the first and foremost condition is that the reality of a free and conscious subject be accepted. But, there being no conscious subject according to the materialist, how can the absolutism of matter be established ? Nor can we regard consciousness to be a fortuitous emergence of material elements. Because in reality it is matter which is dependent on consciousness, and not vice versa. Matter cannot be an independent reality in itself. Only that can be regarded as independent which does not depend upon anything for its manifestation. But matter is nothing

1. P. S. Karika, 2-3.
2. There is, however, the risk that in some sense these terms might convey wrong ideas about what a system stands for. For example, it might be held that the Buddhists, like Mādhyamika and the Yogācāra, cannot properly be called Anātmavādins. For, what these systems really deny is not transcendent self but the empirical self. The Śūnya and the Vijñāna themselves might be represented to be something like 'Self.'

in itself without the light of consciousness. Hence the view that matter reveals itself is unsound. Further, that which is different from Light cannot be regarded as having existence at all. In the absence of light anything can be asserted of anything. In that case, one could even hold that the 'blue' in itself is 'yellow,' or that it is nothing in itself. Its being is essentially a manifestation of the light of consciousness.[1] Only that which is sentient, on whose background alone the so-called existing things, viz., jar, blue, pleasure, etc., as well as their non-being, shine, is real. And this background is also nothing but the light of consciousness.[2]

Though the Buddhist does not bind himself completely to the materialist view, yet, like the materialist, he also regards the permanent self as unreal. According to him, all our experience is confined essentially to the realm of change or becoming. The transitory and the momentary alone is available to us. He holds, like Hume, that we never catch the permanent or the eternal in us. Adopting mainly the viewpoint of the senses, the Buddhist ultimately snatches permanency from matter and spirit alike and postulates the reality of the momentary alone.

According to the Śaivite, the Buddhist doctrine of momentariness is not self-consistent. If the luminosity of an object be identical with, or wholly confined to, the object itself, i.e. if it does not transcend the object, then the object should always be manifest to all persons, or to none. Again, as between two independent things logically none can be regarded as being dependent upon the other, in reality the object should be confined to itself, e.g. it would be 'blue' only in itself. Thus it would imply that it is nothing in itself. As no judgment can be possible in the absence of the luminosity of consiousness, the 'blue' in itself may be regarded either as 'blue,' or also as 'not-blue,' or even both 'blue' and 'not-blue.' The same may also be

1. I. P. V., I. V. 2-3.
2. Ibid. I. 1. 3. Also SN I. 2.

said with regard to the light of consciousness which is non-different from the object. The light which is limited to itself would either be nothing or everything in itself. Hence if the theory of momentariness be accepted, one would not be able to assert anything at all.

In order to avoid this difficulty, it has to be admitted that the light of consciousness which manifests itself as the object is essentially the absolute light or universal consciousness (*Saṁvid*) itself. Otherwise, if the light be supposed to be different in the case of different objects, every object would be confined to itself and there will be no possibility of knowing anything.[1] The objects can be manifest only if they are one with luminosity and they can be one only if the luminosity is universal. The same light which appears in the form of 'cloth' appears in the form of 'jar' also. And though this light appears in the form of different objects, it is not multiple in character. Its multiplicity is essentially due to the limiting adjuncts constituted by body etc., which are material.

Its commitment to the belief in momentariness ultimately lands Buddism in 'nihilism'. The reality of both the aspects of our experience, the changing and the parmanent, is reduced to a mere nothingness on the theory of momentariness. It makes all judgment, communication and expression, impossible. The 'nothing' or the 'nihil' becomes the great truth. Śūnyavāda is, thus, the inevitable result of any belief in absolute momentariness.

Because of the complete transcendence of the absolute-in-itself, thought forms the impression that the absolute is essentially of the nature of *śūnyatā* or vacuity. But the indeterminateness of the absolute need not be interpreted as 'nothingness'. Due to the inability of the finite intellect to comprehend the infinite, the inscrutable richness of the absolute often appears as mere barrenness. Our incapacity to define the nature of the absolute need not persuade

1. I. P. V., I. V. 2-3.

us to the belief that it is nothing.[1] However, if it is held that the absolute is regarded as Śūnya only because of its transcendence to thought, or that *śūnyatā* stands for the transcendence of the phenomenal, then the Śaivite would have nothing to complain. He will only add that besides *śūnyatā* freedom, which is the essential characteristic of consciousness, also belongs to the absolute.

Moreover, *śūnyatā* must at least be characterised as 'being'. An absolute non-existence cannot even be conceived. If *śūnya* be non-existent, then the question would arise whether this non-existence itself is existent or not. If the the former be the case, then obviously it has existence. In the latter case, i e. if it did not have existence, it does not even exist. In either case, the absolutism of *śūnyatā* cannot be maintained. Just as darkness presupposes light for its very existence and manifestation, similarly *śūnyatā* or non-existence presupposes existence. Absolute negation is impossible. Denial or rejection of something as unreal is possible only with reference to something which is real. Negation becomes possible only if there is some positive reality. If everything is denied and nothing is left, then even denial itself is denied. Or otherwise, denial itself becomes a reality.

In fact, the Śaivite holds that *śūnyatā* is not ultimate. It is only a lower state of reality. It presupposes the light of consciousness as its substratum and revealer. Accordingly, it is a mere manifestation of the light as self-limited. It appears as ultimate only to the finite subject. When, in its search for the absolute, the individual arrives at this state everything appears as negated and 'nothingness' appears to be the highest truth. But in reality it is not the highest state. There are still higher visions in which the state of śūnyatā or nothingness is transcended. In fact, not-being is only a word, a mere symbol, through which the finite tries to comprehend the infinite. Actually, when we perceive closely the 'nihil' of certain philosophies, we begin to

1. Radhakrishnan, S., op. cit. p. 665.

realise that it is a zero which is the All, or an indefinable Infinite which appears to the mind as a blank, because the mind grasps only finite constructions, but it is in fact the only true existence.[1] The Yogins who have attained higher spiritual status have crossed the limitations of the finite mind. They have successfully transcended the state of śūnyatā. The Śūnyavādins, therefore, can well serve themselves and humanity if they sincerely approach the Yogins who have realised the mystery of the Śūnya.[2]

If the ultimate reality be conceived as Śūnya then salvation would become meaningless. How can nothingness or *Nirvāṇa* be regarded as the highest aim of life ? The great *Nirvāṇa*, of which the Buddhists speak so highly, is enjoyed daily by all individuals in the state of dreamless sleep. When *Nirvāṇa* is so easily available, where is the necessity of trying to acquire the state of *śūnyatā* through meditation, etc. ?[3] To regard such a state of 'nothingness' as the highest reward of a virtuous life would mean a complete destruction of human values.

According to the Yogācāra the *vijñāna* alone is real. For him external objects are unreal. But the question arises : how can the unreal come out of the real ? Moreover, knowledge, being essentially an activity, presupposes an active subject. It is the subject who is presupposed in all acts of knowing. But if knowledge itself is taken to be the subject, then the distinction between the two is obliterated. Knowledge cannot be characterised both as the agent and the act. For two contradictory characteristics cannot belong to one and the same thing simultaneously. And if the same *vijñāna* be admitted to be an agent at one moment and the act at another, then it would no longer remain momentary. But if the subject and the object both are regarded as essentially identical, then there is no fundamental difference between the Yogācāra and the Śaivite. The Yogācāra should admit that the objects which are reflected in consciousness are essentially identical with

1. L. D. p. 29.
2. S. N. Chapter I.
3. Ibid.

it. For, the very possibility of knowledge and action presupposes such identity.

The object cannot be regarded as unreal. Our sense organs function with regard to the object only when there is a will to that effect. For instance, one sees the 'pot' only when there is a desire to see it. But the desire can be possible only if the object be supposed to be real. Hence the existence of the object has to be postulated in order that the functional activity of the sense organs may begin. And the object exists already as one with the subject, the object of perception (*dṛṣya*) is already included in the consciousness of the perceiver (*dṛṣṭā*).

The negation of Atmavadins

Both the negations, the negation of the anātmavādin and of the ātmavādin, ultimately lead to śūnyatā. Śūnyatā is the logical conclusion at which both the approaches arrive. But the highest reality represents the truth of both aspects of experience. Somehow, both change and permanence are real manifestations of the absolute which is an equilibrium of both being and becoming, or Śiva Śakti *Sāmarasya.* If we accept only one of the dualities as real and reject the other as illusory, in the end the other also, which we accept as real, would be reduced to nothing. Without the one the other has no meaning. The real monism or true advaita is that which admits all things as the one Brahman and does not seek to bisect its existence into two incompatible entities, an eternal truth and an eternal falsehood, Brahman and not-Brahman, self and not-self. If it is true that the self alone exists, it must be also true that all is the self.[1] The self and the not-self are the two inseparable aspects of the absolute conceived in two ways only through abstraction. Pure being itself is a becoming as well; similarly becoming also is a self-becoming of the absolute being. Parmenides and Heraclitus were both right. The real must somehow be an eternal activity which returns upon itself, and this whole activity is somehow broken up into the lesser activities which are our own.[2]

1. L. D. p. 31.
2. Cleobury, F. H., *God, Man and Absolute*, p. 105.

If we accept being and becoming as separate and approach the absolute either in terms of the one or the other, we would finally be facing the fate of Śūnyavāda. We have seen that anātmavāda, in which the reality of the spirit is denied, proves untenable. It arrives at nihilism in the end. Likewise, according to the Śaivite, the sole acceptance of being and the denial of becoming also ultimately leads to nihilism.

In its attempt to understand the absolute the finite mind divides it into separate parts. By its very nature, it can affirm something only at the cost of denying the other. Thus, the negation of being or becoming originates from the essential limited nature of the finite mind. Because of this essential limitation it cannot comprehend the fullness and integrality of reality, Hence it has to employ the method of negation in order to grasp the infinite. As Sri Aurobindo says, there is something behind the phenomena which is not only infinite but is also indefinable in terms of ordinary thought the very conception of movement or flow carries with it the potentiality of repose and betrays itself as an activity of some existence, the very idea of energy in action carries with it the idea of energy abstaining from action, and an absolute energy not in action is simply and purely absolute existence.

Many philosophers, like the Vedāntins, the Buddhists, and others, have fallen into the great ocean of ignorance and have accepted śūnyatā as the ultimate reality. For, it is difficult for the ignorant to transcend the state of 'nothingness.' Indeed, śūnyatā proved a great obstacle even in case of those persons who were about to realise the highest state, viz., *Pūrṇatva*, in the Śaiva tradition. It is only through constant and rigorous efforts that one can transcend the barriers of the finite logic. The moment our efforts slacken, the ultimate appears to us as mere 'nothingness.'[1] That is how the Brahmavādins, who are of the opinion of non-being and

1. प्रायश्चास्मिन् शून्ये दुरुत्तरे महामोहार्णव एव वेदान्तविदक्षपादसांख्यसौगता-दिप्राया बह्वोऽनुप्रविशः । SN, p. 29.

who assert that this Universe was non-being, also arrive at the sphere of śūnya and rest content with it.[1]

Pure being cannot be regarded as the absolute. Although the Vedāntins represent a definite advance upon the nihilists, in as much as they lay emphasis upon the being aspect of reality, they also go to the other extreme and deny all becoming. Pure being, which excludes all becoming and, thus, stands in opposition to it, cannot be ultimate reality. As a first principle, the changeless is, of course, insufficient. Our ultimate reality must have qualities of both changelessness and change.[2]

In fact, the *being* approach of the Vedānta suffers from the same defects as the *becoming* approach of the Buddhist.[3] Like the inactive Puruṣa in the Sāṁkhya or the Śūnya in the Mādhyamika, the Brahman in the Vedānta is also devoid of freedom. Though Brahman has been described as being-consciousness-bliss, yet being devoid of freedom it also becomes material like the Śūnya. What constitutes the chief characteristic of the sentient (caitanya), as opposed to the insentient, is its power of freedom with regard to manifestation. In the absence of this power of freedom, it would rather be impossible to distinguish consciousness from matter, *caitanya* from *jaḍa*. The fact is that absolute materiality is mere śūnyatā or nothingness. Prakāśa (light) would in no way differ from the inert crystal, if it did not possess the capacity to reflect the objects according to its will.[4] If it were devoid of freedom, consciousness would be as good as nothing. Moreover, pure consciousness is never known in experience. Experience always points towards consciousness as being qualified.

1. P. H. p. 42.
2. Hocking, E., *The Meaning of God*, p. 189.
3. पूर्णतामयम् अन्तर्गतविश्ववीर्यसमुच्छलत्तात्मकविसर्गविश्लेषानन्दशक्त्यैकघनं ब्रह्म बृहद् व्यापकं बृंहितं च, न तु वेदान्तपाठकाङ्कीकृतकेवलशून्यवादाविदूरवर्तिब्रह्मदर्शने इव,······ PTV., p. 221. Also SN. p. 23.
4. I. P. V., I. V. 11.

Thus, the theory of pure consciousness is a mere figment of imagination. The exponents of pure consciousness fail to provide any adequate evidence in support of their view. Ultimately the theory of pure advaitism fails to account for the phenomenal world. Such advaitism is strictly narrow and one-sided.

If we postulate an absolutely unqualified and inactive principle as the uitimate reality, we would, in effect, condemn it to the fate of ultimate dualism. Such an ultimate would be wholly incompetent and powerless in relation to the world, as the latter would be completely independent of the former. We will always find that the breakdown and failure of a system in the end is due to its unreconciled dualism. For, if we begin with a monistic principle and in the end fail to deduce everything from it, we virtually surrender monism and accept dualism.

Nor is it reasonable to regard, as the Vedāntin does, the world as unreal. For, if the world which is given in experience is supposed to the unreal, then the experience of Brahman would also be unreal. Both being and becoming are equally given in experience; how can one be regarded as real and the other as unreal ? If it is said that the world of duality is false, then it can also be asserted that similarly pure unity is also proved to be false because of the experience of duality.[1] The Śaivite holds fast to the principle that nothing which is manifest in experience can be regarded as unreal.[2]

The Vedāntins also fail to explain the concept of Māyā. It is difficult to maintain advaitism on the doctrine of Māyā. The more the Vedāntin tries to do so, the more difficult it becomes for him. Advaitism can really be established only on the view that Brahman and Māyā are essentially one, or that the latter constitutes the essential nature of the former. Māyā is like the cloud which covers the Sun, but which is itself revealed by the Sun.[3] To hold that

1. I. P. V., II. IV. 20.
2. Ibid. Also, S. N. I. 3.
3. Kaviraj, G., *Bharatiya Samskṛti aur Sadhana*, p. 5.

Brahman and Māyā are different would amount to an acceptance of dualism. We have to explain the nature of Māyā and answer the question : To whom does it belong ? It cannot belong to Brahman who is pure being, nor can it belong to the individual (jīva) which is a product of Māyā. If it is held to be inexplicable, then the question arises as to whom is it inexplicable ? It would be wrong to say that it is inexplicable to itself. And if it is held that it is inexplicable because it transcends reason, then why should one unnecessarily search after a reason which dis-regards experience ? What is the fun in searching after something which would invalidate experience ?[1] The Śaivite claims that this state of inexplicability could be transcended in the higher states of realization. While all other systems of thought fail to make a distinction between Māyā and Śuddha Māyā, the Śaivite has been very keen to emphasize this distinction. These systems could not fully account for the experience of the mystics and seers who have transcended the state of Śūnyatā and Māyā. They have the vision of reality in which all conflicts and contradictions are harmonised.

In the end the Vedāntin is forced to accept a sort of dualism which is not much different from the Puruṣa-Prakṛti dualism of the Sāṁkhya. Both the Sāṁkhya and the Vedāntin start with the postulation of Prakṛti and Māyā as different from pure consciousness. But neither Prakṛti nor Māyā can be regarded as the real cause of the world. Both systems fail to explain the relationship between transcendent Brahman and Puruṣa on the one hand, and the world of becoming on the other. Hence dualism and allied problems spring up in these systems. The fact is that, like the anātmavādins, the ātmavādins also failed to have a true vision of the ātman. The worshipper of the ātman also do not reach the ultimate state.[2]

In a perfect vision of reality there cannot be a dualism of ātman and anātman. Realisation of absolute unity or

1. I. P. V. I. I.
2. P. H. VIII.

the perfect identity of the ātman and anātman, constitutes the highest wisdom according to the Śaivite. The anātman is ultimately nothing but the ātman. Everything is ultimately real, for everything is of the nature of Śiva. Only when we accept this, the great teaching 'all this is verily Brahman' would be significant. This integral nature of reality is well illustrated in the famous work of art, called 'Trimurti.' 'The middle head of the Trimurti is a representation of the absolute. Majestic and sublime, it is the divine essence out of which proceed the other two. Over the right shoulder, perpetually growing out of the central form, is the male profile of Śiva .. in the left is the female... the middle head is enclosed in a sublime, dreamy aloofness. By its impassivity it silences the two gestures to right and to left, ignoring completely the display of their antagonistic features.'[1]

The Śaiva criticism of the Buddhists and the Vedāntins cannot be fully justified. These systems appear inconsistent only when they are looked at from outside. They appear so only to the Śaiva absolutist who has adopted a different line of approach.

The Mādhyamika does not really mean nihilism by śūnyatā. The charge that śūnyavāda is nihilism cannot be true as the Mādhyamika himself explicitly warns us that śūnya should not be taken to be nihilism.[2]

It cannot be said that Tathāgata is śūnya or aśūnya, or both or neither. The name given to him is conventional. The absolute is neither existent nor non-existent, nor both existent and non-existent, nor different from both. The Mādhyamika also accepts the substance (tattva). The only thing is that it cannot be described as 'sat' or 'asat', etc. Śūnyatā is an unqualified denial of the predicates of the absolute. There can be no positive identification of the absolute with anything empirical. The Mādhyamika starts with the philosophical views or formulations as propounded

1. Zimmer. H., *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, p. 149-50.
2. M. K. XXIV., 7.

by speculative philosophy, and not with an existential situation. He is primarily concerned with the criticism of all speculative theories. Accordingly, there is hardly any justification for characterising the Mādhyamika as a Nihilist.[1] If he were to be described as a nihilist, then every absolutism would have to be regarded as nihilism. For no absolutism can be established without rejecting all determinations of the absolute.

As regards the Śaiva refutation of the Vijñāna Absolutism, it is enough to point out that the Vijñāna is not momentary consciousness. It is the self-luminous reality which like a lamp gives rise to the various states of consciousness out of its own inner potentiality. It is, like Saṁvid in Śaiva absolutism, self-luminous and self-revealing ultimate reality.

The Vedāntin would also vehemently reject the charge labelled against him that his system is nihilistic. In anticipation of such criticism, Śaṁkara states that the Vedānta absolute might appear to be merely non-being or nothing to certain individuals of lesser understanding, as it is devoid of all empirical determinations, such as attribute, motion, fruition and differentiation[2] Though Brahman is devoid of attribution, yet in its essential characteristics it might be understood as being-consciousness-bliss. Besides, it also has other characteristics, such as lordship etc., which are accidental. Although it seems to be the best way of describing Brahman, it is not a complete and true description. Knowledge gives us the highest positive account of Brahman as *Saccidānanda*, while ignorance ascribes such attributes to it which imply relation etc. As regards the attribute of freedom, it is not correct to say that Brahman is devoid of freedom. However, the Vedāntin would hesitate to apply either the attribute power or freedom to Brahman in a positive sense, because freedom is essentially a negative process. Freedom in relation to Brahman can be ascribed

1. C. P. B., pp. 159-60, 234-6, 329-34.
2. Śaṁkara's Commentary on Chānd, Up. VIII. 1, 1.

only negatively, as being 'freedom from.' Freedom essentially consists in being free from the impurities or limitations characterising the empirical life.

Nor can the charge that the Vedānta is but a modified version of Sāṁkhya dualism be justifiably maintained. While Prakṛti in the Sāṁkhya is a reality in itself, independently of the Puruṣa, Māyā is not a reality in its own right : Māyā or Avidyā neither exists nor functions, independently of Brahman. Prakṛti, on the other hand, is not only independent in itself, but also functions of its own. It is the real cause of all events and things. The Vedāntin repeatedly insists, against the Sāṁkhya, that agency cannot be ascribed to the jaḍa Prakṛti.[1]

According to the Vedāntin, the falsity of the world means that it is ultimately unreal. Knowledge is like fire in the presence of which the false objects vanish like the palace of wax. It performs the function by pointing out the falsity of the object of wrong knowledge. The false object does not have any ontological status. The Vedāntin points out that in the instances of dreams and illusions, in which the objects are later known to be false, the dreaming or the illusory consciousness is also recognised to be false. In these cases, the consciousness of the objects and the objects both have a mutuality of existence. Similarly, Avidyā and the objects presented by it are both ultimately false. In reply to the question, how can knowledge destroy a thing, or how can that which is merely ideal perform the ontological function, the Vedāntin draws our attention to the cases of illusion, like the illusion of rope-snake, shell-silver, etc. The illustration of rope-snake shows that besides the sublation of the object, viz., 'snake,' the sublating consciousness itself is sublated when knowledge dawns. The analogy of illusion (*Prātibhāṣika*) is further extended to the empirical (*Vyāvahārika*) by the Vedāntin. The Vedāntic Māyāvāda cannot be equated with śūnyavāda. According to the Mādhyamika the entities lack self-essence

1. V. S. II, ii,

or self-hood because they are infected with relativity. On the other hand, according to the Vedāntin, they are unreal because they do not have a permanent nature or an enduring essence of their own. However, the Vedāntin never doubts the existence of the phenomenal world which derives reality from Brahman. The main aim of the Advaita doctrine of the unreality of the world and the repeated stress on its falsity is to instil the feeling of disgust in wordly things. The attachment to the world does not so easily die by the determination of its transitoriness as by the knowledge of its falsity.[1] Similar motive might be attributed to Buddha and other religious teachers who preach the falsity of the world. They all deny the reality of the worldly life with the sole aim of diverting man's attention from it.

4. The Conception of Absolute

When we consider the different views about the absolute, we find that generally there are two ways in which freedom has been ascribed to the absolute. In the positive approach, the main emphasis is upon the perfection and supremacy of the absolute. Accordingly, here freedom has been conceived mostly in a positive sense, as freedom to perform even the impossible. It is an interpretation of freedom as the 'freedom of'. In the negative approach on the contrary, emphasis is laid upon the transcendence, of the absolute and hence freedom has been conceived as 'freedom from' all limitation and determination. The basic difference in their attitudes gave rise to different conceptions of the absolute in the two approaches.

Absolute as Free Being

The Śaiva absolute might be described as essentially free *being*. The term 'swatantra' indicates that the essence of consciousness consists in great lordship (*Māhesvarya*). It represents the chief characteristic of the absolute according to the Śaivite. In this respect, Parama Śiva differs from

1. *Nyāyamrtadvaita Siddhi* (Calcutta Sanskrit Series) p. 77.

Brahman.[1] Parama Śiva might be described as the pure absolute, there being no separation between cognition and freedom (*bodha and svātantrya*) in it. It is the supreme equilibrium of *bodha* and *svātantrya*.

If the gulf between the phenomena and the noumena, Puruṣa and Prakṛti, is to be bridged, then the two have to be regarded as constituting the two inseparable aspects of the absolute. All other absolutisms failed mostly because of their narrow visions in which the absolute was identified with one of the dualities. The Vedāntin also failed, like others, to realise that 'in a conscious existence which is absolute we must suppose an inherent freedom to manifest or not to manifest the potentiality of movement. A Brahman compelled by Prakṛti is no Brahman but an inert Infinite with an active content in it more powerful than the continent.[2]

Freedom is the very nature of the light of consciousness. For, in the absence of freedom consciousness would not be different from material objects like crystal, mirror, etc.[3] The essential nature of luminosity, as opposed to materiality, consists in having freedom in respect of manifestations. This freedom is natural to the self-luminous consciousness (*Prakāśa*) and is known as absolute independence.[4] There appears to be lack of freedom only in the intermediate state of consciousness which is characterised by 'thisness' (*Idaṁtā*). This manifestation of lack of freedom is itself due to the freedom of the absolute consciousness.

Thc term *citi* or consciousness has been used in singular number in order to show that it transcends all limitations of place, etc. It also indicates that those who believe in the doctrine of non-identity of consciousness are in the wrong.

1. 'स्वतन्त्र' शब्दों ब्रह्मवादवैलक्षण्यम् आचक्षाणः चितो माहेश्वर्यसारतां ब्रूते ।
P. H. I. Com.
2. L. D., p. 80.
3. I. P. V., I, V. 11.
4. Ibid.

By using the adjective 'absolute,' the Śaivite tries to emphasize that the essence of *citi* is great splendour. This brings out the difference between the Śaiva concept of absolute and the Vedānta concept of Brahman. Citi possesses unlimited power or infinite potency. In it alone may be found the way to happiness and great reward.[1]

A greater prominence is given to the power of freedom, in spite of the fact that Parama Śiva has got innumerable powers, because the power of action, the essence of which is omnipotence, includes all other powers. And this is the nature of free consciousness.[2] 'Freedom represents the supreme power of the highest Lord and includes all those powers which can possibly be attributed to Him.'[3] Freedom has also been referred to as *spanda* and *sphurattā* in the Spanda literature, because it stands for that essential nature of consciousness which is responsible for the manifestation of plurality on the background of pure unity.[4] Svātantrya Śakti, being essentially the power of consciousness, is also known as *Cit* Śakti. Sometimes it also stands for self-consciousness. The term '*Svātantrya*' has so frequently been used in the Śaiva literature that the Śaiva Absolutism has often been described as *Svātantryavāda*.

Although the terms like *svātantrya*, *śakti*, *ahaṁtā*, *sphurattā*, *vimarśa*, etc., represent the dynamic aspect of the absolute, all of them do not equally emphasize the same form of dynamism. While *ahaṁtā* emphasizes the dynamism of integration, Sphurattā indicates the manifestation of the unmanifest. Similarly, *vimarśa* expresses the determination of the indeterminate and *Svātantrya* stands for the capacity to perform the impossible.

The concept of *svātantrya* supplies us the key to the riddles of the universe. It helps us in our attempts at solving some of the most crucial and knotty problems which could not

1. P. H. I.
2. I. P. V., I. V. 15-16.
3. Bhāskarī, vol. I, p. 204, 214; T. A. I, 107-8.

be solved in earlier philosophies. With this concept it is possible to bridge the gulf between phenomena and noumena, being and becoming, consciousness and matter. Due to its power of freedom, consciousness appears as phenomenal and noumenal, as being and becoming, as sentient and insentient, as subject and object. That is why the Śaiva absolutist claims that his system alone represents true advaitism. In contrast with other advaitisms, only Śaiva absolutism might be described as consistent advaitism. In comparison with it, various advaitisms appear to be weak, timid and insignificant; for they give the impression as if they are frightened of duality. And in order to avoid dualism, these systems generally end in dualism. In the Śaiva tradition advaitism really means an eternal equilibrium of the dualities. According to it, advaitic or integral *'vimarśa'* is the very nature of the self.

Consciousness is essentially a self-aware force of existence.[1] In every manifestation, it is one and the same consciousness which is organising or expressing itself differently. The finite existence is a diversified organisation of the universal conscious force (*Citśakti*) of Existence. Thus the power that builds the universe is the power of freedom of consciousness. It is this principle that is responsible for maintaining the identity or unity of the absolute during the state of manifestation of the world of plurality.[2]

The essential characteristic of the Śaiva absolute is 'the free act of consciousness'. The Śaivite interpretation of the supreme Self is unique in itself and is not found anywhere else. The act of consciousness, or the characteristic feature of the agent in the act of consciousness, is spoken of as the Self[3]. The absolute, which has created consciousness as its essential characteristic, cannot be described merely as pure *being*. Nor can it be described as śūnya which is wholly negative in character. For, the absolute is the source of all fini-

1. L. D., pp. 83-5.
2. यतश्च इयं विश्वस्य सिद्धौ पराद्वयसामरस्यापादनात्मनि च संहारे हेतुः तत एव स्वतन्त्रा । P. H. p. 37.
3. Bhāskarī, vol. I. p. 249.

tude. *Vijñāna* too, which is devoid of the power of objectification, cannot be regarded as a proper description of the absolute Freedom alone is the distinguishing feature of the absolute. It is the cause of real, not illusory, manifestation of the world.

Parama Śiva is the supreme *sāmarasya* of *bodha* and *svātantrya*, consciousness and freedom, being and becoming, Śiva and Śakti, In its pure transcendental aspect, the absolute is referred to as Śiva or pure being. In its dynamic aspect the same absolute might be described as Śakti or the principle of eternal becoming. Thus, the absolute has been described as '*Śiva-Śakti-Sāmarasya*'. As both these aspects are fully and equally prominent in the absolute, the absolute might also be called perfect or *pūrṇa sāmarasya*.[1]

Śiva is the principle of pure witness consciousness which serves as a background or substratum for the play of Śakti. Śakti is the dynamic principle, the absolute power, which manifests itself in multifarious forms. Śiva and Śakti are not two separate realities. They are the two aspects in which the integral absolute is manifest to us. In other words, they are the two forms in which the non-dual Reality is manifest to us. If the two were to be regarded as separate realities, then both would become inert and ultimately both would be reduced to nothingness, as it is the case in the Sāṁkhya and Vedānta. In order to avoid nihilism, we have to conceive the absolute in terms of sāmarasya. Further, we have also to assume that even when unity is replaced by division, the supreme sāmarasya does not become modified.

Considered from the epistemic point of view, the two aspects of the absolute have been described as Prakāśa and Vimarśa. Thus the absolute may also be described as 'Prakāśa-Vimarśa'. Prakāśa stands for the pure, changeless, witness aspect of the universal consciousness. Vimarśa, on the other hand, stands for the power which gives rise to self-consciousness, will, knowledge and action, successively. Prakāśa can be compared to a pure mirror which serves as a background for the reflection of objects ; Vimarśa represents the power of

1. P.H. op. cit.

the mirror to give rise to reflections. Vimarśa also signifies the capacity of the Subject to know himself in the state of perfect freedom from all kinds of affections. It is the power of self-consciousness or absolute egoity (*Purṇa ahaṁtā*) of the Lord and is called *'aham vimarśa'*, *'āmarśa'* or *'pratyāmarśa'*. In its essential nature Vimarśa might be compared to the limited power of manifestation of the individual subject at the time of dreaming, remembering, imagining and similar activities. It might also be compared to the Yogin's power of creation. Prakāśa and Vimarśa are always united together. Just as Prakāśa is always with Vimarśa, Vimarśa is also never found without Prakāśa. Together they both represent the self-luminous and self-conscious nature of reality. Vimarśa is the throb, the original *'bimb'*, of the absolute 'I' holding within itself, and experiencing as one with itself, the entire universe. It is the power of the highest Lord which always shines as unlimited self-consciousness and never as limited objectivity; otherwise, if it were objective, it would not be independent and would, therefore, require some other principle to illumine itself. And this other principle would also require another principle to illumine it, and this another would require still another, and so on ad infinitum. Consequently, the object, being without anything to rest upon, will not shine at all. Therefore, it has to be admitted that no Vimarśa is separate from Prakāśa. Similarly, if Prakāśa is devoid of Vimarśa, it would cease to be self-luminous, and would become *jaḍa*, which is ultimately nothing in itself. Moreover, even material objects like mirror, crystal, etc., in that case, would have Prakāśa. Without Vimarśa, Prakāśa would not be Prakāsa. Ultimate reality is not only Sciousness, but a Sciousness that also scirs itself. Unlike the prakāśa in the mirror. it surveys itself It is a non-relational immediate awareness of itself. Cit scirs itself as *Cidrūpinī Śakti*. This sciring itself is Vimarśa. Therefore, Vimarśa has also been named as *Parā Śakti*, *Parā Vāc*, *Svātantrya*, *Aiśvarya*, *Kartṛtva*, *Sphurattā*, *Sāra*, *Hṛdaya*, *Spanda*[1].

According to the Vedānta Real is that which does not

1. Jaideva Singh, *Pratyabhijñā hṛdayam* P. 5.

have opposed characteristics. For, if it had opposite characteristics, it would cease to be one. Therefore, the Vedāntin describes the absolute as pure Being. It mlght be characterised as self-evident, universal, and pure Being; the first indicates the epistemological independence of the absolute, the second emphasizes its non-duality, the third shows its relation to the world of difference, viz., its non-relatedness. All these characteristics may be derived from the Vedānta definition of reality as *trikālabādhita sat*[1].

If it is asked whether we know being at all, the Vedāntin holds that we cannot help knowing being; we know it invariably. At least, in one case, with regard to the 'self', we know it undeniably. For, its denial itself is its affirmation. Even in the ordinary cases of cognition of objects one is aware of 'being'. Being or Brahman is the object of every cognition and experience (*sarva pratyaya vedya*). But at the s me time, Brahman is also transcendent to thought. We have to abstract or withdraw from the surface in order to know the underlying features of things. Similarly, to be aware of 'being', we have to see through, or put away, the surface things. That is why dialectic or negation is employed in the Vedānta to do away with the surface things and to uncover the ground of being.

Brahman has also been characterised as free Being in the Vedānta. But the concept of freedom in the Vedānta, as we have already seen, is mostly negative; Brahman is absolutely 'free from' the impurities and limitations which characterise the finite things. According to the Vedāntin, freedom is neither the accumulation of merit, nor the accession of power, but is mostly a negative process of removal of obstacles.

Absolute as Saccidananda

We find a twofold definition of Brahman in the Vedānta Absolutism. Brahman has been described in terms of its

1. Tripathi, R. K., *Spinoza in the Light of Advaita Vedānta*, pp. 102-9.

accidental characteristics as well as in terms of its essential characteristics (*tatastha lakśaṇa* and *svarūpa lakśaṇa*). These two definitions direct and deepen the spiritual process which is already incipient in the desire to realise the Truth. In the discovery of Brahman, the *tatastha lakśaṇa* constitutes the first stage. The *svarūpa lakśaṇa* represents the final stage in which the knowledge of the essential nature of Brahman takes place. Whereas, the *tatastha lakśaṇa* does not provide us with an insight into the nature of Brahman, but only shows Brahman to be the unconditioned ground of the phenomena, this insight is provided by *svarūpa lakśana* In other words, the *tatastha lakśana* is the knowledge of Brahman from without. *svarūpa lakśana* is knowledge which is non-relational. The former gives us the knowledge about 'absolute-for-us', the latter gives us insight into the nature of the 'absolute-in-itself'. The difference between these two ways of describing Brahman can be made clear with the help of an illustration, given by Hiriyana. Suppose we describe a house with reference to its characteristic of being built of bricks, whereas all others are huts or mud houses, it would be an instance of *svarūpa lakśana*, In this case, 'being built of bricks' forms an essential feature of the house. Let us further suppose that this house has a mango tree by its side and no other house is having such a tree. This mark, having a mango tree, may also enable us to describe the nature of the house. But this description would not form an essential characteristic of the house. Hence, it would be an instance of definition by reference to accidental or external feature, *tatastha lakśana.*[1]

We shall consider the *tatastha lakśana* in the next chapter. Presently, it will be our endeavour to compare and contrast the two views about the essential nature of the absolute. In its essential nature, the absolute has been conceived as Being, Consciousness and Bliss (*sat, cit, ānanda*), in both Śaiva and Vedānta Absolutisms However, unlike the Vedānta Absolutism, there is no clear-cut distinction between the accidental characteristics of the absolute in the Śaiva

1. Hiriyana, *Indian Philosophical studies*, I, p. 98.

Absolutism. Accordingly, we shall be confined mainly to considering the distinction between the concepts of *Saccidānanda* in the two systems.

It has rightly been said that although each of these three terms denotes one and the same entity, each does so differently. These terms are not concepts or predicates; each is sui generis the self. Being, Consciousness and Bliss are employed only to differentiate them from their opposites, signifying that self is not non-being, etc. But this does not amount to Buddhist *apohavāda*, which means exclusion from all others, e. g. the concept 'blue' means merely that it is not yellow, not red etc.[1]

Although the absolute in itself is beyond all determinations, yet, it can safely be regarded as negation of non-being. It must have existence or being as its essential nature. Things are real as long as they participate in 'being'. That which is supposed to be absolute must have absolute existence. Of the Real there is no non-existence, and of the unreal, there is no existence. Both the Śaivite and the Vedāntin reject the view that existence is momentary. They commonly hold that eternal existence is the ground and support of all variable and finite existence. But, whereas the Vedāntin regards the finite and momentary existence as a limitation of the absolute pure Existence, the Śaivite holds it to be a real manifestation of the infinite Existence. The Vedāntin holds that the Real is such that its nature remains constant; the unreal, on the contrary, is that whose nature is subject to variations. That which is constant in whatever is variable is different from the variable, as is the string different from the flowers which have been strung upon it.[2] The Vedāntin arrives at the conclusion, after analysing the nature of the subject and the object, that finite existence is unreal; the absolute alone is true existence. Because of ignorance we attribute to the finite such characteristics as existence, etc., which in reality belong to Brahman alone. 'We couple the true and the untrue and indulge in such empirical usage born of ignorance as that "the

1. Chaudhury, A. K. R., *Self and Falsity in Advaita Vedānta*, p. 111.
2. Gītā, II, 16.

pot is real", "the cloth is real". In reality the existence, that is persistent in such cognitions as "the pot exists", is the substrate, while only the particulars, e.g. pots, etc., are illusory.

In the Śaiva approach, on the other hand, the absolute is taken to be the fullest and richest Existence. It is the All, the transcendent and integral reality of all finite existence. It is One, or the *sama*, which is the perfect harmony of opposites. There is no negation of finitude, but merely a rejection of discord, in it. It is Being, such as does not exclude not being; it is consciousness which manifests even the absence of consciousness.[1]

Existence is freedom itself. It pervades even the imaginary objects like 'sky-flower'.[2] Existence is not, what the Vedāntin affirms, a negation of finitude, nor is it open to change or movement. When the Śaivite asserts that Existence is without attributes or forms, he only means that it is not limited by them. In it finitude is transformed in such a way that it becomes one with the Infinite. During the state of their oneness with infinite Existence, the finites cannot be identified or determined in this or that form. That is why it is said that Existence is the highest reality which is unknowable and undeterminable by finite thought. Yet, all things in the realm of becoming contain, are contained in, and are the Absolute.[3] The view that Existence rigorously excludes or rejects the finite existence amounts to a denial of existence itself. For, in reality, Existence, though in itself devoid of all forms, is the source of everything. The integral Existence is not a mere idea or a concept, it is the sole and supreme reality. And its movement, manifestation and change are also real.

The Vedantin puts *sat* before the beginning of everything and regards it to be the ultimate principle. According to him, Existence would cease to be eternal if it also varied with

1. Paryanta Pancāsikā, 2-3
2. Bhāskarī, vol. I, pp. 258-9,
3. L. D., p. 70.

the variable. Therefore, it cannot be denoted by words which, like 'being', in the usual sense signify a category of things. If it is objected that Brahman, being devoid of colour and other perceptible qualities, cannot be an object of perception, theVedantin holds that though devoid of colour, etc., Brahman can appear in cognition exactly as we have the notion of time, which is devoid of colour, etc. What really exists is the 'non-dual', and it alone is the substratum of all existence. 'Existence which is the essential constitution of Reality has neither external relations nor internal differentiation. It is not related to anything, for there is nothing with which it can be related'.[1] Existence being non-dual consciousness, we cannot attribute any parts to it. Nor can it be regarded as one-in-many, or as identity-in-difference. We cannot even hold that names and forms are its constituents. In itself, it is devoid of parts and modifications. While all the objects have triple distinctions, spatial, temporal and contentious being alone has no such distinctions. Hence Being is infinite and indeterminate. Everything else has 'being' only as superimposed on it, We may think away anything, but we cannot think away Being or Existence. We can dismiss the qualities or attributes of Being, but not Being itself. The very thought of denial pre-supposes it.[2] Nor can there be anything else exclusive to Being, whether real or imaginary.[3]

Being or existence has to be regarded as coeval with consciousness, Without consciousness, existence would be nothing in itself. That is why, the Śaivite and the Vedāntin both agree that existence and consciousness cannot be related to each other as substance and attribute. Existence and consciousness both are essentially and wholly identical with each other. Existence is consciousness and consciousness is existence. Consciousness is essentially self-luminous. If It were illumined by something other than itself, then consciousness

1. Mahadevan, T. M. P., *Philosophy of Advaita Vedānta*, p. 111.
2. Sircar, M. N., *The System of Vedānta Thought and Culture*, p. 3.
3. Śankara's comm. on Tait. Up. II, 1.

would not be consciousness. Hence we have to admit that consciousness illumines itself.

In Śaiva Absolutism, *cit* or consciousness, like existence, is illimitable and infinite. In the absolute existence-consciousness, there is an inherent freedom or power which is infinite in itself. Consciousness in its very essence is eonscious power *(cit śakti)*. Unlike the Vedāntin, who conceives consciousness as pure consciousness, the Śaivite regards it essentially as free consciousness. If consciousness were devoid of freedom, it could not be a source of the manifestation of the Universe. What constitutes the essence of all activity is the freedom of consciousness. This freedom is the essence of all existence and consciousness. It is manifest to all persons through self-experience, as being identical with their own nature. Its presence can also be felt during the states to which one is reduced at the time of excessive anger, joy, fear, deep grief, hunger, etc.[1]

Freedom constitutes the only point of differentiation between the intelligent and the intert beings. In the absence of this distinction it will not be possible to distinguish the *jaḍa* from the *cetana*. We attribute consciousness in the case of the individual, but deny the same in the case of material objects like 'pot', etc., simply because the former possesses freedom and the latter does not. Evidently, the presence and the absence of freedom constitutes the essential nature of the sentient and the insentient. While the sentient has freedom to illumine either itself or others, the insentient fully depends for its manifestation upon the sentient.[2] While conceiving the Absolute in terms of Consciousness, we are necessarily admitting that it is free. For consciousness and freedom go together; in the absence of the one the other would be reduced to mere nothingness. Thus, being separated from each other bodha and svātantrya would lose their very identity. Consciousness is essentially free, and is of the nature of Vimarśa or self-consciousness.

1, S. K., 22.

2. I. P. V. I. v., 11. स्वभावमवभासस्य विमर्शं विदुरन्यथा ।
प्रकाशोऽर्थोपरक्तोऽपि स्फटिकादि जडोपमः ॥

As against this, the Vedāntin holds that a logical analysis of the nature and concept of our knowledge inevitably leads to the theory of differenceless or non-dual Reality which at best might be described as pure consciousness. There can be no differences of parts or aspects in Consciousness. Consciousness is free only in the sense of transcending impurities and limitations. It is the one without second and precludes the possibility of difference or distinction, of like or unlike nature, whether within or outside itself. To attribute power or freedom to the universal Consciousness would amount to introducing relations and differences within it. Freedom can be ascribed to Consciousness only negatively. It has freedom, but freedom which keeps it free from limitation, or defilement.

As there is no conception of *Cit Śakti* in the Vedānta, there can be no place for the doctrine of absolute self-consciousness in it. Self-luminosity of consciousness does not mean that it is simultaneously the subject which illumines and the object which is illumined. One and the same entity cannot be the agent and the object of the same act.[1] Nor can self-luminosity mean that which is not revealed by similar luminous thing, as in that case even the lamp would also be self-luminous. Nor does it mean that which is not an object of cognition but which is the subject of usage that ensures its direct awareness. Self-luminosity really means that which is not an object of cognition and yet is describable as a datum of immediate experience.[2]

Besides describing the absolute as Existence and Consciousness, the Vedāntin and the Śaivite also refer to it as Bliss or *ānanda*. Limitation or finitude is suffering, freedom or perfection constitutes happiness. The infinite Existence-Consciousness, which is absolutely free and perfect, is supreme Bliss itself. Bliss constitutes the essential nature of both Brahman and Parama Śiva. The term Śiva denotes happiness; similarly, the word Brahman, whose root is Bṛha, Bṛhi, to

1. Choudhury A. K. R., *Self and Falsity in Advaita Vedānta*
2. Citsukhi (N. S. Ed.), p. 10.

increase, signifies absoluteness, owing to which it is Bliss. It is the source of all happiness that is enjoyed in the world. If the absolute were not of the nature of Bliss, why should there be any desire for its realisation ? Nobody hankers after pain or suffering. All living beings are always in search of *ānanda*. which is the source of all existence. The Absolute is ānanda because it is the infinite or the *Bhūmā*.

In Śaiva Absolutism, the absolute is ānanda, because, besides being the *Bhūma,* it is also freedom or Vimarśa, or self-consciousness. This brings out the main difference of the Śaiva conception of ānanda from that of the Vedānta. Parama Śiva is itself described as *ānanda* and there is also the experience of ānanda in it. If there were no consciousness of ānanda, there could be no sense in describing the absolute in terms ef Bliss. We have to accept that in the absolute there is an experience of ānanda.

In the Vedānta, on the other hand, the absolute does not have any consciousness of ānanda ; it is ānanda itself. Ānanda cannot be regarded as an object of experience, as there is no subject-object relationship within Brahman. An admission of such distinction would amount to a division of the indivisible non-dual Reality.

Obviously, the description of the absolute as *Saccidānanda* has different implications in the two systems. The Śaiva absolute is *sat. cit*, and ānanda in itself, and is also conscious of itself as such. It is always conscious of itself as Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Existence itself has no meaning without an existent ; consciousness also has no standing place, if there is none who is conscious ; similarly, delight is useless and invalid without an enjoyer.[1] 'The self of things is an infinite, indivisible existence ; of that existence the essential nature or power is an infinite and imperishable force of self-conscious being, of that consciousness the essential nature or knowledge of itself is again an infinite inalienable delight of being.'[2]

1. L. D. p. 319.
2. Ibid, p. 94.

But, according to the Vedāntin, there can be no self-consciousness in Brahman, there being no subject-object relationship in it. These terms ultimately denote Brahman only negatively. Brahman is Being as opposed to non-being or falsity (*mithyatva*); it is consciousness as opposed to materiality (*jaḍatva*); it is absolute Bliss as it is opposed to limitation or *finitude* (*paricchinnatva*). Being, Consciousness and Bliss cannot be regarded as attributes of Brahman as there is no substance-attribute relationship in it. Being, Consciousness and Bliss are equally and fully Brahman. Each of them does not represent a separate absolute, as they all denote one Reality in different ways.[1] Although they denote one and the same entity, the difference between them is not merely verbal, each denotes Brahman differently. While *sat* excludes *asat*, *cit* and *ānanda* exclude matter and pain. Prof. Murti makes the pregnant suggestion that *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* stand for three functions of knowledge, willing and feeling. Spirit is Truth or knowledge. Spirit is will and Spirit is Bliss. Each is sui generis and is not to be confounded with the others.[2]

According to the Śaiva absolutist, Parama Śiva is ever a Personal-Impersonal God. Will, Knowledge and Action constitute the essential nature of *Saccidānanda* and the world is a real manifestation of it. While the *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* aspects of the absolute are always fully manifest, both in the phenomenal and noumenal states, volitional, cognitive and functional forms of the absolute become manifest only during the state of creation. The two highest powers, viz., *Cit Śakti* and *Ānanda Śakti*, are fully manifest both at the transcendent and empirical levels. The other three Śaktis, *Icchā*, *Jñāna*, and *Kriyā*, become manifest only during creation.

While aiming at having a conception of the absolute, only two alternatives are open to us. Either we should regard the absolute as wholly indeterminate, and absolutely

1. The two definitions of Brahman in Advaita Vedānta, op. cit.
2. Ibid.

devoid of all categories, as it is done by the Mādhyamika. Or, if we want to have a positive conception of the absolute, we should not stop, like the Vedāntin, at the *tatastha lakśaṇa.* For, Brahman is not only Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, but also the Highest Lord (*Parameśvara*) who is essentially self-conscious, omnipotent and omniscient.

Absolute as Purna Aham

The Śaiva absolutist also describes the Parama Śiva as the Absolute Subject (*Para Pramātā*). The absolute is the Supreme 'I,' the all-inclusive Reality. The conception of the absolute as the Supreme Ego enables the Śaivite to avoid the two extremes—the danger of drifting towards abstract or pure monism of the Vedānta type and drowning into the great void of the Mādhyamika. It is not necessary to reject either the subject or the object, the knower or the known, in order to arrive at the notion of the absolute. For, it is the very nature of the Self to manifest itself simultaneously as the knower and the known, as it ever performs the transcendental functions of *Nigraha* and *Anugraha*, self-concealment and self-revelation [1]

The absolute Ego is the most appropriate expression of the 'continuum absolute.' In this conception, finitude and infinitude, moment and eternity, microcosm and macrocosm, and all extremes give up their bi-polar and opposed characteristics and become one in the integral absolute. 'All the states, such as creation, maintenance and destruction, waking, dreaming and sleeping, are present as phenomena in the consciousness of the Goddess (Bhagawatī), in the fourth state, where it is absolute bliss, the state of perfect Egoity, from where these states derive existence.'[2] 'He is at once the universal subject and object of all perception,

1. I. P. V., I. V. 15.

2. विश्वापेक्षया ये सर्गादयो, मायाप्रमातृगताश्च ये जाग्रदादयोऽवस्थाविशेषा:, ते उभयया एतस्मिन् भगवति आनन्दघने 'तुरीये धामनि' चतुर्थे पूर्णाहन्तामये पदे 'भान्ति' तद्विश्रान्ता: सन्त: स्वरुपसत्तां कल्पितप्रमात्रपेक्षया

the supreme unity. His essential nature is the rapture of supreme Egoity, as opposed to the fictitious egoism of the physical personality.'[1] Thus, the Self which is the great Lord, is the supreme universal intuition of self-hood. While active as subject of finite perception in all intelligence, it still remains throughout all modes of experience self-identical, the one universal consciousness.[2]

The absoluteness of self-consciousness has been established on the basis of reasoning in the Śaiva system *alone*.[3] As consciousness always implies self-consciousness, the absolute is ever conscious of itself. If *caitanya* did not know itself, it would not differ from the insentient. The main characteristic of the sentient, as opposed to the insentient, is its capacity for self-revelation or self-awareness. It is the revealer who reveals himself, besides revealing the object. This self-knowledge is not something accidental to the self, rather it constitutes the very nature of the Self.[4] The power of self-awareness has been described as Vimarśa or Svātantrya and consists in the feeling of ānanda. It is the basis of unification of finite experience. The awareness of the objects and the consciousness of their connection with each other would not be possible if they were supposed to be resting either on fluctuating consciousness or on pure witness consciousness. The mutual relationship between various cognitions can be explained only if they, e.g. 'blue,' 'pleasure,' etc., are supposed to be resting, and facing one another, in the ocean of consciousness, the great 'I.' To this 'I,' they are carried through various determinate cognitions which might be compared to the various currents of rivers.[5]

The absolute is not of the nature of pure consciousness, as is held by the Vedāntins. A Self as pure as crystal, devoid of freedom, cannot make any determinate activity,

1. Ibid, Comm. 5th Kārikā.
2. Ibid, Kārikā, 7.
3. I. P. V., I, VII Intr.
4. T. S., p. 12; I. P. V., I, V. 12.
5. I. P. V., I, VII; 2, I, V, 11-12.

nor can it manifest anything. The fact is that the Self is always of the nature of self-consciousness –His being the great Lord consists in His eternal self-conciousness, unrestrained freedom, etc.[1]

The Supreme Self cannot be regarded as finite. There is nothing from which the Self can be distinguished. It is the perfect reality and there is nothing independent or outside of it.[2] It is not the fictitious egoism of the physical personality, but a rapture of supreme egoity, the transcendental self-awareness. The differentiation between the subject and the object is itself dependent upon the universal consciousness, the self or the spirit, wherein there is no opposition between the ego and the non-ego.[3] Nor does it mean that the Self is a mere complex of ego and non-ego. For, there is no subject-object relationship in the supreme ego itself. Its self-luminosity indicates the absence of bifurcation of subject and object in it. Such dichotomy is an essential characteristic of finite existence. Oppositions and polarities, including that between the subject and the object, do not exist in the supreme Ego, which is the state of absolute unity. It is the state of identity of Parā Śakti, which is Parā Vāc, with Parameśvara. This supreme egoity is possible due to the functioning of the power of consciousness, the Vimarśa or Cit Śakti. It is also described as the reflection of pure being aspect of the Absolute, on its own mirror-like self. It is the self-awareness of the Supreme Existent.

The 'I' is the integral and all-comprehensive reality and indicates the all-inclusive and all-pervading nature of the absolute. Its essential nature is absolute freedom and

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1. न च अस्य असौ प्रकाशलक्षण: स्वात्मा नीलाद्युपरागश्च परामर्शनशून्य एव आस्ते स्फटिकमणेरिव, अपि तु सदैव विमृश्यमानरूप:, इति विमृशद्रूपत्वम् अनवच्छिन्नविमर्शता अनन्योन्मुखत्वम् आनन्दैकघनत्वम्, तदेवास्य माहेश्वर्यम् । Ibid, I, VIII, 11.
2. T. A. II. 195.
3. S. N. I, 14-16.

power. Vimarśa or free consciousness identifies itself with others and negates itself, merges both into one state (as in Sadāśiva) and denies both, which have been merged into one.[1] It is, in its essential nature, the inner speech which is independent of the indicatory signs and is unbroken self-experience, which is free from all objectivity. It is like the inward shaking of the head and is the very life of all thought and language. It is the background and source of all experience.

The Self is the centre of all existence. It is not merely a whole or a system but the One, Eka, in which everything is identical with it. In other words, it is the All wherein all become One. There are no internal or external relations in it. As opposed to the finite, or the middle state of existence (madhya avasthā), the 'I' is the ultimate state where beginning and end, front and rear, are one. The state of objectivity, *Idamtā*, appears mysterious or unreal only to the ignorant who do not see that it has origin and end in the Supreme 'I.'[2] For, it is the 'I' which provides the connecting link to the various states of existence. Being unable to see the uniting light of the Self, the ignorants take the intermediate state of existence, the state in which we are, as inexplicable or illusory. In reality, the entire finite existence and experience originate from, are sustained by, and merge back in, the Self. This is the basic feature of self-consciousness.

Though the objects are apparently different from one another, in reality there is no difference between the Self, which is the creator and is of the nature of self-consciousness, and the created, because they ultimately rest upon the 'I'. The things created by the Lord are ultimately to be conce-

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1. विमर्शो हि सर्वंसहः परमपि आत्मीकरोति, आत्मानं च परीकरोति, उभयम् एकीकरोति, एकीकृतं द्वयमपि न्यग्भावयति इत्येवंस्वभावः ।
I, P. V. I, V. 13.
2. मध्यावस्थैव तु इदन्ता विमृश्यमानपूर्वापरकोटिः विमूढानां मायापदं संसारः… । Ibid, I, V, 11.

ived only as 'I', which is the highest point of rest in the thought process. All cognitions regarding activity, movement, rest, relation, etc., finally rest upon the 'I'. The point of rest in the middle is essentially of the nature of objectivity and is purely temporary in thought process. It is like the rest under the shade of a tree while one is on the way to a village. Ultimately, the cognitions, such as 'blue', 'pleasure', etc., though constituting the intermediate state characterised by 'this-ness', are really identical with the self or 'I', because they ultimately rest upon it. Even the consciousness 'I know the blue' is in reality nothing more than 'I shine'.[1] All consciousness, whether objective or subjective, is ultimately nothing but self-consciousness, a form of 'I' consciousness. The 'I' is the ultimate subject of all judgments. If it were otherwise, nothing would ever be known.[2] The ultimate end of all objective consciousness is its merging in the Self and is known as the *viśrānti* or the rest.[3] Thus, Self is the ultimate rest of everything (*aham viśrānti*). Resting within the self, entire objectivity shines as 'I' consciousness. The Self or Supreme Ego is the entire universe, not as we generally understand it but in its ideal state, as a vision of the integral unity. The 'I' is the infinite Mother of all finitude. The '*ah*' in *aham* represents all the letters of the Devanāgari alphabetic system from *a* to *h*, and as such signifies all the basic ideas manifested by the absolute consciousness. *Am* stands for *bindu* and signifies that the absolute, the Anuttara, though manifesting itself in the various forms of thought, does not lose its essential nature but ever remains in its own unbroken light of consciousness.[4] All the ideas, which are represented by the letters from *A* to *H*, arise from and rest in the absolute in so far as they are the manifestation of its power of

1. 'नीलम् इदम् वेद्मि' इत्यपि हि 'अहंप्रकाशे' इतीयत्तत्त्वम् ।
I. P. V., I, V, 17.
2. तद्विश्रान्ति विना अर्थो ज्ञात एव न भवति । S. D. p. 8.
3. I. P. V. I, i, 1.
4. T. A., II. 193-4.

freedom.[1] Thus, the supreme 'I' stands for the absolute unity of subject, object and means of knowledge, i.e. for the *Bhairava* itself.[2] In practical life, efficacy of all the mantras and determinate ideas ultimately depends upon the rise to the state of supreme unity, viz., the 'I.'

In the Vedānta also the absolute has been described in terms of self-hood. The Self alone has that immediacy and self-evidence without which the absolute cannot realise its own nature, as infinitely great. The proof of the reality of Brahman is that it is the ground of the self of every individual. All the positive attributes of Brahman derive their meaning from the conception of absolute as Self. But, the Vedāntin insists that the absolute self cannot be regarded as self-consciousness. For, egoity is ultimately linked up with the adjuncts of subjectivity and objectivity. Self-consciousness is possible only in the realm of difference. There can be no possibility of self-conciousness in the absence of dualism or difference. Consciousness reveals and, as such, it cannot itself be an object of revelation. If consciousness were to know itself, it would be like fire burning itself. Nor can it be held that consciousness is the knower in one moment and known in the other moment. For, being successive, these moments cannot be available together. Moreover, the succeeding moment would itself stand in need of being revealed, and so on ad infinitum, so that nothing is revealed. Nor can consciousness be revealer and the revealed at the same moment. That is why Śaṁkara holds that the distinction between consciousness and the content it reveals is too patent to be explained away by any logical jugglery.[3]

The notion of an awareness which is just an awareness of itself is a very difficult one. No cognitive state ever has itself for its object. If it is what is meant by self-consciousness, then there is no such thing as self-consciousness. And

1. Ibid. 196.
2. Ibid. 198; Pandey, K. C., op. cit., pp. 667-8.
3. S. B., II, ii, 28.

if it is said that this is applicable to finite consciousness alone, the realist may retort that we have no right to conceive, for the purpose of describing the real, of a type of cognition which differs from human cognition in what seems an essential feature of the latter, viz., a reference to an object other than itself.[1] Professor Alexander has rightly rejected the view that the self can be an object to itself. According to him, our experience shows that the object revealed in consciousness is different from consciousness.[2] If it is asked as to how it is possible for the self to be identified with the changing modes of consciousness, the Vedāntin points out that in the case of finite knowledge, consciousness does not differ with the differing cognitions. In all cases of knowledge, consciousness reveals itself as the non-dual, unmodified reality. Even when we have different cognitions of one and the same object, as in the case of perceiving or recollecting the same object, there is no difference in consciousness. The knowledge of 'pot' is not different from the knowledge of 'cloth': It is the same knowledge which appears to be limited first by 'pot' and then by 'cloth' etc.[3] Hence amidst all changing cognitions, consciousness is one and the same. As regards the question, why does consciousness appear to be multiple, the Vedāntin holds that the mental modes which precede knowledge or awareness are distinct with every distinction of objects and it is because of these modes that the universal cosciousness appears to be limited. In reality consciousness is one and the objects are distinct from it. This consciousness is the Supreme Self. The Self is self-luminous because it does not contain the negation of luminosity.[4] But the self-luminosity of consciousness does not mean that it is an object to itself. The subject can know itself only in one of the two ways. It can either know itself partially, i.e. one part of it can know the other; but this

1. Cleobury, F. H., opp. cit., p. 13.
2. *Space, Time & Deity*, Op. cit. p. 16.
3. *Self and Falsity in Advaita Vedānta*, p. 76,
4. आत्मा स्वप्रकाशः स्वसत्तायाम् प्रकाशव्यतिरेक विरुद्धत्वात् प्रदीपवत् । Advaita Siddhi, (N. S. Ed.) p. 781,

would mean that there are internal divisions within the subject. It is not possible to conceive consciousness as having parts. No distinction of parts and parts, aspects and and aspects, part or aspect and whole, can be made in the nature of consciousness. For, in that case, consciousness would become luminous or conscious in one part, and non-luminous or unconscious in the other. The second way in which the subject may know itself is that it may know itself entirely. In this case the knower and the known would only be coinciding with each other. But this alternative is also not acceptable as it would be illogical to hold the same thing as the agent and the patient in respect of the same act. Thus the subject, which is the very ground of all experience, cannot be known as an object. It is always the seer and never the seen.[1] The self-revealing consciousness cannot be regarded as consciousness of consciousness. When one says 'I know that I know the pot,' what happens is that the first awareness, 'I know the pot,' has already ceased as soon as the second awareness 'I know that I know the pot' begins; and so the former awareness cannot be directly cognised by the subsequent awareness. Hence when one knows that one knows the pot, it is a case of another state of cognition and not the cognition of cognition. Knowledge is self-revealed. It canot become an object in any sense. When the scriptures say that the sight of the seer is never destroyed, it only emphasizes the eternal nature of cognition and does not imply a relation between the seer and seen. Hence, strictly speaking, the self cannot be regarded as being of the nature of self-counsciousness. It is only the finite ego, which is opposed to the non-ego, which can be regarded to be self-conscious. The Supreme Self is indeterminate pure consciousness.

The Śaiva absolutist insists, as we have seen, that the pure 'I' is not determinate. As determination requires duality, and as there is no duality in the self, the self or the 'I' is non-relational. It is of the nature of immediate and

1. Hiriyana. *Indian Philosophical Studies*, I, p. 135.

direct self-awareness.[1] The Supreme Ego is essentially perfect and is independent of everything else. Because it lacks determinacy, therefore, it has been described as Pure and Perfect.[2]

5. The Absolute and Godhead

When the Śaivite holds that the Absolute is self-conscious he means that it is both personal and impersonal. Owing to its nature as *vimarśa* it is personal; it is also impersonal in its nature as *prakāśa*. It is characterised with both being and becoming, transcendence and immanence, as it is the integral unity of 'Puruṣa', the transcendental aspect of the Absolute (Śiva), and Prakṛti, the self-manifesting power of the Lord (Śakti). It is the Reality which assumes the form of the conscious being, regarding and accepting, or ruling over the works of its own nature.[3] It is the personal God, the Supreme 'I,' which is conscious of itself and presides over its own powers. But, at the same time, it is impersonal also, as it is wholly indeterminate and transcends all manifestations. It might be described as both qualified and unqualified (Saguṇa and Nirguṇa), and yet it is neither qualified nor unqualified.

It is not merely the God whom the religious people worship. It can neither be limited by any attributes, nor can it be defined in terms of pure transcendence. Like the Saguṇa, the Nirguṇa also is a manifestation of the unmanifest Absolute. All these predicates ultimately refer to the Absolute, who can neither be defined nor be limited by them. The Absolute is manifest as a Personal God for the sake of worship. But, evidently, he is not the personal god of religions, a being who is limited by his qualities, and who is individual and separate from all other beings. For, all such

1. अहंप्रत्यवमर्शो यः प्रकाशात्मापि वाग्वपुः ।
नासौ विकल्पः स ह्युक्तो द्वयाक्षेपी विनिश्चयः ॥ I. P. K., I, vi, 1.
2. परप्रमातरि योऽयं पराऽहन्ताचमत्कारः स वाग्रूपोऽपि निर्विकल्पः ।
P. S., p. 33.
3. L. D. p. 17.

personal gods are only limited representations or names and divine personalities of the one Supreme. Neither is it the Saguṇa Brahman, for that is only one side of the Absolute. The Nirguṇa, the immobile and without qualities, is another aspect of the Absolute.[1]

When the Śaivite attributes self-consciousness to the Absolute the question arises, how can the non-dual absolute reality have a personal awareness ? Obviously, the absolute unity cannot have any personal self-consciousness. If it is said that his personality consists in his knowing of himself, is this a knowledge on his part like the knowledge we have of ourselves ? Obviously, the absolute cannot be aware of itself in the sense in which we are aware of ourselves. In our case, individuality is the basis upon which personality evolves. But, this cannot have any relevance to the nature of the absolute who is not an individual. Thus personality, which is wholly a human idea or category, cannot be applicable to the Absolute. That is why the absolutists, like Bierdmann, Von Hartmann, Bradley and Bosanquet in the West, and the Vedāntin and the Buddhist in the East, hold the view that personality involves a contrast or opposition and, as such, it cannot be ascribed to the Absolute. On the other hand, there are absolutists, like the Hegelians, and the Śaivites, who identify the God with the Absolute and regard Him as personal. They hold that while personality is incomplete and finite in mankind, it need not be so in the case of God. The finite is not a complete or true person; the Infinite or Absolute alone is the Supreme person. There is a contrast between the Self and the not-self in the case of finite individuals. No contrast or opposition, whatsoever, can exist in the Absolute. The Śaivite holds that the personal and the impersonal aspects of the Absolute do not conflict with each other. The conflict between these two aspects appears only in the realm of finitude, which involves a disintegration or

1. Ibid, pp. 317-20.

separation of the integral and inseparabie reality. In the integral vision there is no irreconcilable opposition between the personal and the impersonal, the finite and the iufinite (*kśara* and *akśara*). We might hold that the impersonal is only a power of the personal; the spirit is the Puruṣa, the all Person.[1]

Of course, it is true that finite personality depends upon something other than itself. However, this dependence need not be an essential characteristic of all personality. The finite depends upon its opposite, as it is not a sufficient condition of its own existence. But this is not the case with the absolute which alone is the true existence. Thus, the conditions which are implied in empirical personality do not operate in the case of the supreme personality. The finite is not a norm for all personal existence. The absolute is personal in a sense different from the finite.

The Brahman is described as absolutely indeterminate in the Vedānta. The words do not denote Brahman in any sense recognizable. The best way to describe it is to employ the method of 'double negation.' The moment we try to apply human categories to it, or make it an object of thought, it no longer remains the absolute in-itself but becomes the absolute in relation to us. In itself, Brahman transcends all categories; it is neither personal nor impersonal. The personal Brahman, the absolute limited by the adjuncts of Māyā, is a lower Reality. The Highest Brahman is devoid of personality. Its godhead is a relational manifestation and depends upon the limitations of Māyā. The Lord depends as Lord, upon the limiting adjuncts of name and form which are the products of avidyā. In reality, none of these attributes belong to Him. For, He is free from all adjuncts whatsoever. Nor does the relation of ruler and the ruled exist in reality. God is only a phenomenal ruler whose being depends upon avidyā. Together

1. L. D., pp. 318-19.

with avidyā, the lordship also vanishes at the dawn of right knowledge. Brahman is pure being without any limitation or qualification.

Brahman cannot be called a person as personality is constituted of two elements, the self and the not-self. Personality is realised only through the not-self. Personality disappears the moment the not-self is destroyed. From the logical point of view, the concept of a personal god cannot be true. Īśvara or personal god is not the absolute, but the highest manifestation of the absolute. A personal god can only be an aspect of the absolute and not the absolute itself.[1] Śaṁkara has rightly emphasized the non-relational nature of absolute consciousness.

Brahman cannot be regarded as both personal and impersonal, as the relation between these two aspects of its nature cannot be logically determined. Analysis would reveal that personal Brahman is a patch-up reality consisting of two irreconcilables, viz., Brahman and Māyā. Śaṁkara insists that the same thing cannot be said to be with and without attributes as it involves self-contradiction.[2] A thing cannot possess two essentially opposed characteristics. It is impossible to think that one and the same thing should possess by itself certain characteristics and also should not possess them. Therefore, it must be definitely asserted that the absolute is devoid of all forms. Though Brahman appears in the form of Īśvara, and Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer of the world, ultimately all appearances are unreal. The appearance of Brahman as qualified (Saguṇa) Brahman is only a lower form of reality. Ultimate Reality is absolutely pure and indeterminate.

As we have seen, the Śaiva absolutist insists that the absolute, being the integral reality, is the All. It is both Nirguṇa as well as Saguṇa and is always endowed with the

1. Radhakrishnan, S., *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, p. 410.
2. S. B., III, ii' 11.

power of free consciousness, What the Vedāntin describes as the highest reality, the Nirguṇa Brahman, is in reality a lower form of reality. Beyond the Nirguṇa, there are higher forms of manifestation of the absolute which cannot be limited to this or that form. The main concern of the Śaivite is to establish the absoluteness of God. According to him, the God of religion is itself the absolute and ultimate reality.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ABSOLUTE AND MANIFESTATION

"We bow to that Śiva, who, because of his free will, creates variety of forms, by separately manifesting the objects, which in the state of identity with Him, are like one solid mass, by means of His power of differentiation which is like a chisel,"[1]

Manifestation, ābhāsa, shining or being known, are the different names of the objective. According to the Śaiva absolutist, everything that shines objectively is a mere ābhāsa, an appearance of Consciousness. The object exists as long as it is illumined or manifest in consciousness. Thus, the creation of an object is nothing but its manifestation in consciousness. The creation of universe is, likewise, an act of manifestation of universal consciousness. The Śaiva theory of knowledge is also, at the same time, the theory of manifestation. *Abhāsavāda* is both epistemological and cosmological doctrine.[2] The divine omnipotence, which is in reality the power of freedom of consciousness, is manifest both in the sphere of knowledge as well as action. His freedom being of two kinds, the Lord is described as Knower and Doer (*Jñātā* and *Kartā*). Though in reality there is only one Lord, this difference between the two aspects of His freedom has been brought about by Himself in order to make others understand His real nature. Therefore, freedom in the act of knowing is identical with the power of action.[3] The power of knowledge having been established, the view that Saṁvid has unlimited power of action is also automatically established.[4] The fact is that the powers of knowledge and action are inseparable.[5]

1. I. P. V., I, vi, Intr.,
2. Cf. Supra, Chapter V pp. 112-125
3. Bhāskarī, vol. I, pp. 397-8.
4. I, P. V., II. i. Intr.
5. Ibid III. I. 1.

1. The Absolute and Causality

The Absolute is regarded as the source of the manifestation of the world. It is the absolute which manifests itself in the form of the world. Every appearance or ābhāsa is a real manifestation of the Absolute. However, the Absolute being the cause of all manifestation, no manifestation, in so far as it is a manifestation, can be identified with the Absolute. The Absolute is, thus, both the manifest and the unmanifest (ābhāsa and nirābhāsa) according to Śaiva Absolutism. But in Vedāntism, on the other hand, the appearances are regarded as illusory manifestation of the Absolute (*vivarta*). Brhaman is the source of world appearances only in the sense of being their unconditional ground. It is the ultimate substratum underlying the appearances. And, as it does not really manifest itself, all manifestation is ultimately false. There can be no phenomenalisation of the absolute. The appearances do not belong to Brahman; they are merely and wholly superficial, having no depth.

But the Śaiva Absolutist holds that appearances really belong to Brahman. Parama Śiva, being both transcendent and immanent, *viśvottīrṇa* and *viśvamaya*, is manifest as well as unmanifest. In its unmanifest aspect, it is pure prakāśa or Śiva which is the transcendental background of all appearances. In its vimarśa aspect, it is the entire universe both in its manifest und unmanifest forms.[1] All causality or activity ultimately belongs to Parama Śiva. He alone is the efficient, material, first and final cause of the world. It is only the sentient who can be regarded as the real cause of all manifestation. For, the manifestables, having no existence of their own, always depend upon the subject for their manifestation. Creation of objects or events is nothing but their manifestation in consciousness, which alone is the cause of their internal as well as external existence. In the case of all worldly transactions, such as sprouting, etc., the Highest Lord alone must be admitted to be the real cause. For nothing else, not even the seeds etc., can reasonably be represented to be the cause. It is the Lord Himself who, in union with other manifestations, such

1, P. H., p, 90 ; T.L. p, 69 ; S. D. p, p. 194,

as seed, water, earth, etc., appears as the sprout.[1] Ultimate causality cannot be ascribed to anything other than the absolute.

Matter cannot be regarded as the ultimate cause of the universe. The material is nowhere found to be self-sufficient. The very being or shining (i.e. manifestation) of the material depends upon the light of consciousness. If it were not illumined by consciousness, it would be as good as 'nothing.' Powers of knowledge and action cannot belong to the insentient which has no freedom. That is why, it is maintained that in statements, such as 'the chariot is going,' the use of the verb 'go' is merely due to transference of epithet. Thus, the being of the insentient entirely depends upon the sentient, and knowledge and action are the very life of the sentient.[2] The insentients, being objects of determinate cognition, do not have independent being. They have their being only as related to and dependent upon the sentient subject, as is testified by the perceptual judgment 'the blue shines to me,' or 'the blue is the object of my knowledge.' If the 'pot' could produce itself, where would be the necessity of the potter? The fact is that whenever the insentient appears to be the cause, it really depends upon some sentient as its prompter. The refusal to admit this would involve the fallacy of assuming the absence of a prompting cause. In the case of the creation of the pot, the potter, who is the prompting cause, is himself the Lord. The law, in accordance with which he brings the pot into existence, is essentially the free will of the Lord who has manifested his power called Niyati which necessitates the operation of the wheel etc., in the case of the pot. If it were otherwise, then why only the insentient clay etc., and not the insentient, like thread and others, follow and respect the will of the potter?[3] Hence it has to be admitted that causality or creativity really belongs to the insentient.

1. I. P. V., II. iv, 8.
2. Ibid, I. i. 3.
3. I. P. V. II. IV. 2-9.

It is also untenable to regard, like the Sāṁkhya, Prakṛti to be the primary cause of the world manifestation. The insentient Prakṛti cannot be held to be the originator, prompter and guide of the process of evolution of the world. For, evolution shows that there is a planned scheme in the process of manifestation.[1] Prakṛti cannot be source of such contradictory manifestations as one and many, change and permanence. It is illogical to make contradictory assertions with regard to one and the same thing. Unity and Multiplicity cannot be the essential characteristic of the insentient. Both these characteristics may, however, be attributed to the self-luminous consciousness. These mutually opposed phenomena are nothing but manifestations of consciousness. They shine in the universal consciousness exactly as rest and movement, one and many, identity and difference shine simultaneously in a mirror, without destroying the identity of the mirror. There is however a difference, between the manifestation in mirror and that in consciousness. While the mirror has no power of reflection and depends upon some other cause such as light etc., consciousness being self-luminous reveals the objects owing to its own free will. Accordingly, it is consciousness alone which can be represented to be the real cause of all manifestation.[2]

While establishing the view that causality belongs to the sentient alone, the Śaivite also rejects the view that pure consciousness alone is the ultimate cause. According to him, consciousness which is devoid of freedom cannot be the source of world manifestation. In the absence of the desire which presupposes a determinate consciousness of identity of the manifested with the self, there can be no act of creation or production.[3] If it is contended that consciousness is really pure and non-dual and the manifestation of duality is due to *avidyā*, the question would arise: To whom does avidyā belong ? It cannot belong to Brahman which is pure

1. Ibid. 17-19.
2. I. P. V. II. iv. 19.
3. Bhāskarī, vol. II pp 201-6.

consciousness. Nor can it belong to anything else, as there is nothing other than Brahman. And if the mystery of avidyā or Māyā is regarded to be essentially inexplicable, to whom is it inexplicable ? If its inexplicability means that it cannot be defined or explained through reason, then why should we accept a reasoning which is opposed to the facts of experience ? Multiplicity is a given fact of experience and if reason is unable to explain this fact, it alone is to be blamed for its failure and not the reality. Attempts at explaining the world of plurality in this way, really amount to explaining it away. No better reason for establishing the existence of the multiplicity of objects can be possible than the recognition of the facts of experience. It is not satisfaetory to hold that though duality is manifest it is proved to be false in the end. For, on the contrary, it is non-duality which is sublated by the appearance of duality. The awareness of the falsity of something is due to the rise of the consciousness of its opposite. If the Vedāntin's view be accepted, then even the scriptures would also become unreal, as they also involve the idea of duality.

It has to be accepted that Saṁvid unfolds the universe upon its own screen—like background, through its own free will and not by the will of something else.[1] Everything shines on the background of consciousness, nothing can shine outside of it.[2] Absolutism requires that the ultimate causality should belong to the absolute alone. The ultimate can neither be the pure unity, nor a duality composed of separate and independent entities.[3] Thus, neither the Sāṁkhya nor the Vedānta theory of creation is acceptable to the Śaiva absolutist.

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1. स्वेच्छया' न तु ब्रह्मादिवत् अन्येच्छया, तथैव च, न तु उपादानाद्यपेक्षया,—एवं हि प्रागुक्तस्वातन्त्र्यहान्या चित्त्वमेव न घटेत–'स्वभित्तौ,' न तु अन्यत्र क्वापि, प्राक् निर्णीतं 'विश्वं' दर्पणे नगरवत् अभिन्नमपि भिन्नमिव 'उन्मीलयति' । P. H. p. 39.
2. परमेश्वरभित्तौ यत् न प्रकाशते तत् बाह्यतयापि न प्रकाशते । P. S. p. 75.
3. Pandey, K. C., opp. cit. p. 653.

The manifestation of the objects is possible because of the power of freedom of consciousness, the essential feature of which is free will, which expresses itself in the form of 'desire to act.' All the manifest and the manifestable are ever present in the free will as one with it. Ultimately it is the free will of the Highest Lord which gives rise to the manifestation. The manifested universe is identical with the absolute. It does not lose its identity with the universal consciousness.[1] The creativity of the Lord is his inscrutable will which appears in the form of the universe constituted by various ābhāsas which are in the different stages of creation, sustenance etc., and thousands of their sub-varieties.[2]

Vastu, *Tattva* and *Prameya* are synonymous terms in Ābhāsavāda. Thus, everything is essentially an ābhāsa. And an ābhāsa is essentially one with the light of consciousness. In the absence of oneness with the light, it would be regarded as non-existent. Both in its manifest and unmanifest states, the object is essentially of the nature of Prakāśa; it is Prakāśa itself.[3] Before its manifestation, in its indeterminate state, the object exists as one with the universal light, as omniform and perfect.[4] Its manifestation or creation is essentially an ideal process and not a physical one. According to Ābhāsavāda, the production or creation of an object is merely an externalisation of the 'idea' which previously existed as one with the light of consciousness.

Creation is nothing but an objectification of that which is essentially subjective. It is of the nature of self-consciousness and might be described as His knowing of Himself. On the basis of experience, logic and scriptural authority, self-consciousness appears to be the very life of the self-luminous subject.[5] Through the process of manifestation,

1. IPV. II, iv. 20.
2. Bhāskarī, vol. II, p. 208.
3. IPV. I. V. 11.
4. Ibid. I. vi. 3.
5. प्रकाशस्य प्रमातृरूपस्य प्रत्यवमर्श एव जीवितम् इति ··· अनुभवागमन्यायस्वरूप-निरूपणाभिः अभिधत्ते । Bhāskarī, vol. I, p. 195.

the Self knows itself in various ways. In other words, creation might be described as a determinate awareness of the Indeterminate. As all the subjects are essentially one, all knowledge, whether it be in Sadāśiva or in a worm, is the knowledge of the Subject.[1] During manifestation, the indeterminate and absolute self-consciousness assumes the form of determinate and relative consciousness. However, even when it becomes an object of determinate knowledge, it remains in its essential nature as the absolute subject. It is only on this supposition that the relationship between the creator and the created might be explained. By establishing this explanation, on the basis of valid arguments, the Śaiva absolutist attempts to show that no other explanation of creation is possible.[2] The only valid explanation of creation is that, knowing himself through the multiplicity of objects, Śiva alone shines.[3]

Parama Śiva, who is essentially the subject, becomes manifest as an object through his own free will. Creation is, thus, an apparent bifurcation of the absolute subject as finite subject and object. While creation is the manifestation of the subject as an object, destruction or involution is the assimilation or merger of the object in the subject. Accordingly, the entire process might be described as a subject-object and object-subject circularity.[4]

Creation is nothing but externalization of that which is already one with consciousness.[5] Creation is not a new production, it is a mere externalisation of that which is internal. It can be compared to the creation of a new piece of art by the artist. In this case, novelty consists in the

1. IPV. I, i, 4.
2. प्रकाशात्मा परमेश्वरः स्वात्मानं ज्ञात्रेकरूपत्वात् अज्ञेयमपि ज्ञेयीकरोति…। Ibid. I, v, 15.
3. नानाभावैः स्वात्मानं जानन्नास्ते स्वयं शिवः। SD. V. 109; PS., p. 97.
4. स्वान्तर्निमग्नः पदार्थसमूहः तस्य भासने-अहमिति स्वान्तःप्रदेशात्-इदमिति वहिरभासने। Bhāskarī, vol. I, p. 47.
5. महागुहान्तर्निर्मग्नभावजातप्रकाशकः।
ज्ञानशक्तिप्रदीपेन यः सदा तं स्तुमः शिवम्॥ Bhāskarī, vol. I, p. 193

external manifestation of the ideas which previously existed as identical with the consciousness of the artist. The universal creation might also be conceived on the analogy of creativity of the individual. Actions of an individual are nothing but the external manifestation of his ideas which in the original state were one with his self-consciousness. When the individual wakes up, his individual creation or manifestation of his ideas and activities, begins. The universal creation, likewise, begins with the awakening, which is nothing but externalisation of the universal consciousness (*Unmeṣa*). Again, when the individual goes to sleep, all his ideas and activities of waking life cease to become manifest and merge back with his self-consciousness. In the same way, the dissolution of the created universe might be described as a sleep of the absolute consciousness (*Nimeṣa*).[1] The universe is nothing but the psychical life of all the subjects projected outwardly. When Śiva awakens, the world which is potentially latent in Him starts becoming manifest (creation). The world exists, when He is awake. The world merges and rests in a potential state in Him, when He is asleep.

Creation might also be described as the external manifestation of the transcendental speech, or a manifestation of the 'word' as the object. First of all, the word arises in pure consciousness; later on, during the state of creation, it is manifest as the object. The whole process might be compared to Yogic creation in which the object follows the thought of the Yogin.

The object might be regarded as the manifestation of the subject. Both the finite subject and object, which were in a state of perfect unity with pure consciousness prior to creation, appear separate from each other as well as from the universal consciousness during creation. But in reality, they always remain inseparable from the universal consciousness. Hence, creation is merely an apparent separation of the subject and the object. It is the manifestation of

1. PH, IV. ; Bhāskarī, II. pp. 221-4.

separation or difference on the background of consciousness. Similarly, destruction is nothing but a removal of difference and the manifestation of unity. It is the nature of consciousness that it manifests difference in unity and unity in difference (*Abhede bhedanam, bhede ca abhedanam*). As the multi-coloured feathers of a peacock lie in a state of undifferentiated unity, *sāmarasya*, in the egg of a peacock, so do the multiple objects of the world exist in unity with consciousness prior to their external manifestation. The internality of objects consists in their oneness with consciousness, while their externality consists in being separate from it.[1]

Here, it might be asked as to how can it be possible for consciousness or subject to appear as object. In reply to this it may be stated that creation is nothing but the manifestation of the vision of difference. Consciousness has freedom to manifest difference and still remain unaffected. Like an actor or sportsman, the absolute subject may indulge in the play or game of world manifestation. The Lord, though having perfect knowledge, becomes manifest as limited or ignorant for the sake of play, like the king who assumes the role of a beggar in an act of play. No object is really created or destroyed ; there is no absolute creation or destruction. Separation, disintegration, or differentiation, is the mark of creation. Unification or integration characterises the phenomena of dissolution.

As there is nothing like an independent or real object, creation of objects is the manifestation of the ideas. Like a sculpture, the subject carves out various figures or forms upon its own background. The manifested forms are neither different nor separate from the manifesting subject; otherwise, they could not be manifest at all. Accordingly, creation is nothing but a manifestation of difference within the unity of consciousness.[2] However, it does not imply that creation is unreal. The main difference between the Śaiva and Vedānta Absolutisms lies in the fact that while

1. IPK., I. VIII. 8
2. IPV. I, III. 7

the former regards creation as real, the latter regards creation as illusory. The Śaivite holds that creation is essentially a form of self-manifestation of the absolute. The universe appears as reflected in consciousness and is not a mere figment of imagination.[1] Manifesting the various types of subjects as different from objects, causal relations and so on, on its pure mirror-like self, the absolute itself shines as the creator.[2] The glorious and the Highest Lord, who is perfectly free to follow or transgress the laws of nature (Niyati), Himself assumes the various forms.[3] He is the ultimate principle which performs the five-fold functions of creation, maintenance, etc. Manifesting the universe which has both succession and simultaneity, He alone shines. The process of manifestation might appear to be illusory or unreal to the finite intellect, but in reality it is not so. Even if it is an illusion, it is a real illusion.

The Śaiva Absolutist would have to face a dilemma. If the universe is different from consciousness, it is nothing whatsoever, i.e. it is as good as non-existent; but if it is non-different from consciousness, how can we establish the relationship of cause and effect between them ? This dilemma is solved by the Śaiva Absolutist by using causality in a special sense. What is meant by causal relation in this context is that the Divine consciousness, which is luminous, absolute, and free-willed, alone flashes forth in the form of numerous worlds. There is no successive causal connection in it. The cause and effect are not successive in consciousness. A mere flutter of consciousness is simultaneously the manifestation of the universe.[4]

The Vedāntin, on the contrary, regards the world as an illusory manifestation of Brahman. The Śaiva criticism of the Vedānta theory of creation is not very much

1. Bhāskarī, vol. II, p. 220.
2. Ibid, p. 150.
3. IPV., II, iv, 10.
4. ननु जगदपि चितो भिन्नं नैव किञ्चित्; अभेदे च कथं हेतुहेतुमद्भाव. ? उच्यते । चिदेव भगवती स्वच्छस्वतन्त्ररूपा तत्तदनन्तजगदात्मना स्फुरति,— इत्येतावत्परमार्थोऽयं कार्यकारणभाव: । PH. p. 36.

relevant. For, the Vedāntin is not interested in deducing the world from Brahman. According to him, there is no legitimate process from the noumena to the phenomena. Though the existence of the world cannot be denied, we should not overlook the demands of reason in our haste to lodge the empirical in the absolute. We need not sacrifice the rational in order to satisfy the non-rational or the emotional in us. The first and foremost question, before we discuss the process of creation, is whether the world is real or not.

Logically it is not possible to maintain the theory of a real creation or transformation. After an analysis of the different theories of creation, the Vedāntin arrives at the conclusion that all change is illusory. There can be no real creation or production of the effect from the cause. Likewise, the world as a whole cannot be regarded as a real effect of Brahman. It is ignorance or lower knowledge which applies to the absolute attributes which imply relation, such as creatorship and rulership of the universe. In itself the absolute is beyond all these attributes.

Establishing the validity or superiority of Satkāryavāda over Asatkāryavāda, the Vedāntin proceeds to point out the inconsistency in the former. Although the effect is not independent of the cause, nor is it altogether a new beginning, it is only an illusory manifestation of the cause. There can be no real process from the cause to the effect, either as self-transformation or as self-manifestation, without modifying the essential nature of the cause. Ābhāsavāda, the Śaiva theory of manifestation, is basically the same as Satkāryavāda. Any real manifestation of cause as effect would really amount to self-transformation of the cause into the effect. When the Śaivite holds that the Parama Śiva himself undergoes world transformation, or that creation does not mean a modification of the cause, the question arises : what is the actual difference between the two states of the cause, the unmanifest and the manifest ? These two states cannot be regarded as identical, as in

that case there would be no difference between the cause and the effect. However, if they are supposed to be different, it follows that the cause does not remain self-identical, but becomes modified or changed. If it is held that externality and internality constitute the main difference between the two states, or that the internal state of manifestation is the cause and its external manifestation the effect, then also it would amount to some kind of modification of the cause.

The absolute does not really transform itself into the world. Undoubtedly Brahman, being the sole reality, alone can be regarded as the ultimate cause of the world. That is why the Vedāntin also defines Brahman as the cause of the world and thereby distinguishes it from entities like Prakṛti etc. However, it merely shows that there could be no world if there were no Brahman. It does not imply that the world has actually emerged from Brahman. It is merely an accidental characteristic of Brahman (tatastha lakśaṇa), in that the characteristic of being the cause of the world does not really pertain to Brahman.[1] It indicates that Brahman is not compelled to appear but merely condescends to appear. Being not necessarily connected to the world, it can appear in any form.[2] The Vedāntin does not hold the view that the world cannot be the effect of Brahman or that Brahman cannot produce the world. For, that would amount to a limitation of the absolute. The postulation of a necessary causal relation between Brahman and the world would imply that the world is the only manifestation of Brahman and would amount to a denial of the absoluteness of the absolute.[3]

The important question is whether the world could really be produced out of Brahman. If it were a real production out of Brahman it would be as real as Brahman itself, and in that case there would be two realities. Hence, in order to avoid the dualistic predicament, we have to

1. Hiriyana, *Indian Philosophical Studies*, I.
2. The two Definitions of Brahman in Advaita.
3. Ibid.

reject the view that the world is the real effect of Brahman. The world is a mere modification or transformation of Māyā, and an illusory manifestation (*Vivarta*) of Brahman. There is no substantial change ; all change is mere appearance or vivarta. The absolute does not really transform itself in the world of effects. Though Brahman is the support and substratum of all manifestations, they are really due to Māyā or Avidyā. Without assuming some principle of Avidyā or ignorance, it would not be possible to account for the appearances. Avidyā is the power which superimposes the manifold of sense on the super-sensuous and Supreme Brahman.[1] This can be observed in the illustration of rope-snake illusion. In this illustration, the illusory manifestation of the snake takes place owing to the ignorance of the real nature of its substrate, viz. the rope. Even when it appears as snake, the rope is not really transformed into snake but remains identical. When knowledge takes place, no change takes place in the nature of the rope, but only its illusory appearance, the snake, is cancelled. The rope is, thus, affected neither by the appearance nor by the cancellation of the snake. The reality of the snake is merely derivative. It appears to have existence because of a false identification with the rope. The relationship between Brahman and the world is analogous to the relationship between the rope and the snake.

There can be no real transformation of the absolute into the phenomena. It is only because of ignorance that Brahman appears as the world of change or becoming. 'We must remember that the so-called creation is not absolutely real, for the entire expanse of things is mere illusion.'[2] Although Brahman might be described as the material and the efficient cause of the world, in reality it is neither. Causality might be attributed to Brahman as its qualification *par accidens* and not as an essential qualification.

1. Mahadevan, T. M. P., *Philosophy of Advaita* p. 313.
2. S. B., III, ii 6.

It is untenable to hold that the world 'somehow' belongs to Brahman, or that it cannot be rejected completely. For, if there is only a partial rejection, which part is to be rejected and which is to be retained ? And if the rejected part is also regarded as 'somehow' real we will not be rejecting anything. But the appearances cannot be regarded as constituting reality. Nor can it be held that the rope 'somehow' assumes the appearance of the snake for some moments and later on at the dawn of right knowledge resumes its original form. The fact is that it never assumed the form of snake.

The relation between appearance and reality is of the nature of *adhyāsa* or superimposition, which has been defined as the apparent presentation to consciousness, in the form of remembrance of something previously observed in some other thing.[1] Thus, the relation between them is only one-sided. While the appearances imply the real, the real need not imply the appearances. To appear is essentially to appear in the place of the real, but to be real is not necessarily to appear.

Brahman is neither a knower nor a doer. It is due to the confusion of the subject with the object that we falsely attribute activity, agency and enjoyment to the Subject. Without the delusion of the 'I' and 'Mine' in the body, sense organs, and the like, there can be no knowership, and consequently no means of knowledge is possible. For, without calling in the aid of sense organs no perception is possible, but the action of sense organs is not possible without a resting place, viz. the body. And no action at all is possible without transferring the being of the Self to the body; and without all this taking place no knowledge is possible for the soul, which is independent of the embodied existence. But without the action of knowing, no knowing is possible. Consequently, the means of knowledge, perception and the rest, belong to the realm of *avidyā*.[2]

1. S. B. Intr.
2. Ibid. I, i, 1.

2. The How and the Why of Creation

According to the Śaiva Absolutist, the manifestation of the universe of contradictory forms becomes possible due to the power of freedom of the absolute. His freedom represents the capacity for manifesting the world.[1] It is this power of freedom which performs miracles in the state of finite existence.[2] It is known under various names, such as perfect egoity, energy, spanda etc.[3] It implies unobstructed freedom in creating that which appears extremely difficult.[4] When compared with the powers of other gods who are its creations, it is called the independent and great power. It constitutes the volitional aspect of the absolute which brings about the manifestation of the world, like reflections in a mirror. The universal consciousness manifests externally the objects which ever shine as 'I,' because of its omnipotence, the chief characteristic of which is freedom.[5] The power of freedom is called *Mahāsattā* as it is the cause of all that can be said to exist in any way. It is also called Parā Vāc because it represents speech in its most subtle form. Its essential nature consists in bringing about diversity in unity and unity in diversity.[6] The distinctive feature of this freedom consists in the power of free consciousness [7]

It might be asked as to how can we establish the existence of the powers of knowledge and action in the subject, which

1. तत्सामर्थ्यम् स्वातंत्र्यम्; IPV., I. ii. 7.
   चितिः स्वतन्त्रा विश्वसिद्धिहेतुः ॥ PH. I.
2. Ibid, II, iii, 17.
3. SN. III. 13.
4. मायापदे अतिदुर्घटं प्रतिभाति, तत्सम्पादने यत् अप्रतिहितं स्वातंत्र्यं तदेव पुनः स्वातन्त्र्यशब्देन दर्शितम् । IPV. I., v. 16.
5. तस्मात् सर्वोऽयं भावराशिः चिदात्मनि अहम् इत्येव वपुषा सततावभासुरवपुः ऐश्वर्यरूपाच्च... Ibid I. V. 10-16.
6. स च अयं स्वतन्त्रः। स्वातंत्र्यं च अस्य अभेदे भेदनम्, भेदिते च अन्तर अनु-सन्धानेन अभेदनम्...। Ibid. I. I. 1.
7. TS. p. 11.

alone can justify the attribution of freedom or lordliness to him ?[1] In reply to this, the Śaivite holds that the power of knowledge is self-established, so also is the power of action. When associated with a particular body, this power of action is perceptible to the other finite perceivers. From this, the presence of the power of knowledge is also guessed. The fact is that all the forms of cognition of past, present and future, shine on the background of self-luminous consciousness alone. It is so obvious that it does not require any discussion. For, if the self were not shining, the whole world would be reduced to a mass of darkness, or it would not even be so. Even the statement of a child indicates the self-luminosity of the self. If we deny the self-luminosity of the subject, there would be no question, nor any answer.[2] In the case of cognitions, such as 'I know,' besides the self-luminosity of the self, there is a consciousness of association with a stir also. It is because of this stir that the self is admitted to be sentient in nature. This stir is technically called *vimarśa.* It is the power of action. This is what Somānanda said, 'at the time of cognition (say, of a jar) the cognitive stir in relation to the object is action.' Therefore, the internal power of action like that of cognition is self-established This very internal power of action, because of its inherent power enters into body, through vital air and the Puryastaka and, being of the nature of stir in itself, becomes direetly perceived as physical action in the sphere of māyā That physical action, when seen in another person's body, logically makes us guess the power of knowledge which is its essential nature. Knowledge cannot shine as an object, for objectivity is opposite of knowledge.[3] The light of

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1. ननु ज्ञानक्रिये एव कथं सिद्धे यत् ऐश्वर्यव्यवहार: प्रसाध्यते···। IPV. i. 4.
2. तदप्रकाशे हि विश्वम् अन्धतमसं स्यात्, तदपि वा न स्यात्, बालोऽपि हि प्रकाशविश्रान्तिमेव संवेदयते । ··तन्निह्नवे हि क: प्रश्न:, किम् उत्तरं च स्यात्-इति । Ibid. Bhāskarī, vol. I, p. 71.
3. न च ज्ञानम् इदन्तया भाति, इदन्ता हि अज्ञानत्वम्··· । Ibid. p. 75.

consciousness which is associated with another person at the empirical level is non-different from the light of consciousness of one who congnises. The otherness is due to limiting conditions of it. And if we proceed to think rationally, we discover that the limiting condition itself is non-different from the self. Hence, from the philosophical point of view all subjects are one. That one alone is. It is one and the same self that shines as one's own self as well as the selves of others.[1] Therefore, all knowledge, whether it be in Sadāśiva or in a worm, is the knowledge of one knower. Thus the omniscience of the subject is established. The same can be asserted with regard to the action of the Subject.[2]

Śiva does not require any instrument for bringing about the manifestation of the world. Without any break in continuity, He manifests the objects by virtue of His will which has no definiteness or succession. All the objects, both before and after manifestation, exist as one with Him, as He is absolutely powerful. His creativity is nothing more than this manifestation of His will.[3] A free being means one whose nature is to employ without fail the means for the accomplishment of the end, or he who employs himself in his work without requiring any other prompter. The universal Saṁvid, in a certain order, or even without any order, manifests the objects externally in various ways because of his omnipotence, the chief characteristic of which is freedom.[4] Freedom, being just the opposite of dependence, implies independence in all respects. If the Self is to seek the help of something other than itself, it would cease to be the self whose chief characteristic is freedom. Moreover, it cannot seek help

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1. परज्ञानमपि स्वात्मैव; परत्वम् केवलम् उपाधेर्देहादेः, स चापि विचारितो यावत् न अन्य इति विश्वः प्रभातृवर्गः परमार्थतः एकः प्रमाता स एव च अस्ति । Ibid, p. 76.
2. Ibid.
3. यदेतदाभासनं यासाविच्छा, सा क्रिया, अस्य भगवतो निर्मातृत्वम् । Ibid. II. iv. 1.
4. Ibid. I. v. 10

from the not-self, which is essentially insentient and which itself depends upon the self. It follows that the self does not seek external help and manifests itself as an object of knowledge owing to its free will.[1]

'According to this system, in reality action is nothing else than the very will of the Lord, which is independent of all the rest, and which is of the nature of unbroken self-consciousness and is the unchecked power of perfect freedom.'[2] The power of action, the essence of which is omnipotence and which includes all other powers, is the nature of free consciousness.'[3] 'Causality is nothing but making that, which revolves within, the object of both internal and external senses; the same universe which shines resting within the Lord as one with Him, because of its connection with different times and places etc. and, therefore, its objectivity to senses, is perceived as many.'[4] Thus, action is basically nothing but the external manifestation of the creative will of the Lord.[5] Ultimately, Highest Lord alone is the Creator.[6] The entire universe is a creation of the Divine will, it does not involve any self-modification of the Lord.

This creativity of free will can be observed even in ordinary life. It is a well-known fact that the Yogins create various objects due to their will power alone.[7] This

1. पारतन्त्र्यं च स्वातन्त्र्यस्य विरुद्धम् । स्वातन्त्र्यमेव च अनन्यमुखप्रेक्षित्वम् आत्मनः स्वरूपम··· । Ibid. I. v. 15
2. इह तत्त्वतः परमेश्वरस्य अप्रतिहतस्वातन्त्र्यरूपाविच्छिन्नस्वात्मपरामर्शमयी अनन्योन्मुखतारूपा इच्छैव क्रिया ·· । Bhāskarī, vol. II, p. 24.
3. सर्वाः शक्तीः कर्तृत्वशक्तिः ऐश्वर्यात्मा समाक्षिपति । सा च विमर्शरूपाः ··· । IPV., I, v. 15.
4. Ibid. II, ii. 2.
5. Ibid. I. v. Intr.
6. Ibid. II iv. 21.
7. यथा योगिनां सर्वभावत्वमिच्छयानेकात्मत्वं वा भवतीति इष्टं तथा परमेश्वरस्यापि मन्तव्यम् । न ह्यसौ योगी स्वात्मनों मृत्पिण्डस्येव शिविकस्तूपकादिरूपविकारपरिणामक्रमेण कुम्भकार इव घटमिव भावमण्डलं जनयति, अपितु यस्य यादृशीच्छा तत्समनन्तरमेवेष्टकार्यात्माभिलाषात्मतया स्थितिः, तथा चिदात्मनोऽपि । SD. pp. 111-4, Also 10-13.
यत् पुनरिदं योगिनाम् इच्छामात्रेणपुरसेनादिवैचित्र्यनिर्माणं दृष्टम्, तत्र उपादानं प्रसिद्धमृत्काष्ट-शुक्र-शोणितादि वैचित्र्यमयं न संभवत्येव ··· । IPV. I. V. 7.

will power is also known to the individuals, through self-experience, as being identical with their own nature and is manifest everywhere. It is recognized in that state to which our ego is reduced at the moments of excessive anger, joy, pain etc. In other words, its presence can be felt during the intense feeling of fear, grief, hunger, curiosity etc.[1] It is of the form of '*aunmukhyatā*,' which can be witnessed at the time of suddenly remembering or forgetting, during intense pleasure, at the beginning of fear, when suddenly seeing the unseen, at the climax of sex enjoyment, at the end of a speech, and while quickly reading the text.[2]

Pure consciousness, which is devoid of freedom, cannot be the cause of manifestation of the world. Consciousness which is essentially free alone can manifest the world appearances.[3] This is evident in the case of a Yogin's creation, wherein the Yogin produces pot, etc., which have permanency and serve their respective purposes, by his sheer will power, without taking the help of clay etc.[4] Similarly, the universal consciousness, whose power of freedom is acknowledged, manifests the objects externally by virtue of its free will. Therefore, instead of feeling the weariness due to search for some other cause, why not admit the freedom of the Self in the manifestation of the world ? The manifesting of objects is the chief characteristic of consciousness and is self-established truth. Its sentiency itself is its power of freedom. Hence, as there is this possibility that the Lord makes everything manifest, what then is the use of believing in the other cause which is not based on reason ?[5]

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1. SK., 22,
2. SD., pp. 11-12,
3. IPV. II. iv. Intr.
4. योगिनामपि मृद्वीजे विनैवेच्छावशेन तत् ।
   घटादि जायते तत्तस्थिरस्वार्थक्रियाकरम् ॥ Ibid. II iv. 10
5. तत् इह विश्वरूपाभासवैचित्र्ये चिदात्मन एव स्वातन्त्र्यं किं न अभ्युपगम्यते स्वसंवेदनसिद्धम्, किमिति हेत्वन्तरपर्येषणाप्रयासेन खिद्यते ।
   Bhāskarī ,vol. I. pp. 228-9,

The creativity of the Lord can be seen on the analogy of the reflectivity of such things as mirror, crystal etc. 'As the limpid crystal assumes a semblance of diverse colours, likewise God also assumes the semblance of god, man, cattle, trees, etc.'[1] The only difference between the reflectivity of these objects and of consciousness is that these objects do not have freedom of reflection, but have to depend for it on some external cause; on the other hand, consciousness is absolutely free.[2] The Lord, though really one and independent, assumes in the clear mirror of the self, the forms of individuals created by himself.[3]

The free will of the Lord is always manifesting itself in the form of the five-fold function of universal creation, maintenance, destruction, self-concealment and self-revelation. Thus, the Lord always performs these five-fold functions, and there is no break in his shining as the universe in various ways, such as creation, destruction etc [4] 'He always diverts himself in creation, ever rests in pleasure of maintenance, and is ever satisfied with the food of the three worlds.'[5] While the functions of creation, destruction and maintenance operate on the phenomenal plane, the functions of self-concealment and self-revelation, *nigraha* and *anugraha*, operate at the transcendental level. Creation is the manifestation of separation; keeping the manifest as separate, is maintenance (sthiti); the manifestation of unity or integrality is destruction (saṁhāra) All these functions are manifest simultaneously in the absolute. There

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1. नानाविधवर्णानां रूपं धत्ते यथाऽमलः स्फटिकः ।
सुरमानुषपशुपादपरूपत्वं तद्वदीशोऽपि ॥ PS. Kārikā 6.
2. T. S. pp. 18-19
3. ततः संबिदेव विश्वमात्मनि भासयति शक्तिवैचित्र्यात् । Bhāskarī, vol. II, p. 157-9
4. श्रीमत्स्वच्छन्दादिशासनोक्तनीत्या सदा पञ्चविधकृत्यकारित्व चिदात्मनो भगवतः । PH. p. 62-64.
5. सदा सृष्टिविनोदाय सदा स्थितिसुखासिने ।
सदा त्रिभुवनाहारतृप्ताय भवते नमः ॥ IPV., I. v. 10. (Bhāskarī I. p. 239).

appears to be a gulf between these various functions from the point of view of the finite alone, in reality each function includes all others. For example, when a flower is manifest, i.e. when it becomes an abhāsa to a subject, its creation is nothing but its appearance in consciousness; similarly, its maintenance also is nothing but its being apparent. It exists only as long as it appears. Its appearance and its existence (sṛṣṭi and sthiti) are identical. But its very appearance or existence involves its destruction (saṁhāra). It is being destroyed or submerged in consciousness during the very process in which it is appearing or existing. Here a question arises as to how there can be the possibility of functions such as creation etc., if there is no succession in the absolute. Moreover, when the five-fold functions are supposed to operate simultaneously, there can be no possibility of succession. Anticipating such questions, Abhinavagupta holds that 'in the case of the Lord, the determinate consciousness, in the form of the will "Let me lord over," "Let me move," "Let me be self-conscious," is in reality nothing else than the 'I' consciousness in its essential nature and there is nothing like succession in it.'[1] At the level of the absolute everything shines as self-consciousness. To the subject, who is perfect and free from all limitations, the objects shine as his very self. Therefore, in this state the objects are also perfect in every way. For, such is His real nature. Everything is perfect in form and action, in every way, in Him.[2] The process of distinct manifestation of object begins only at the time of creation.

The Divine Śakti is simultaneously identical with emanation and absorption. It assumes the creative function

1. एवम् ईश्वरस्यापि 'ईशे भासे स्फुरामि घूर्णे प्रत्यवमृशामि' इत्येवंरूपं यदिच्छात्मक विमर्शनम् 'अहम्' इत्येतावन्मात्रतत्त्वं न तत्र कश्चित् क्रमः, ... । IPV. II, i, 8

2. अमितस्य स्वरूपेयत्ताशून्यस्य तु संवित्तत्त्वस्य भावाः स्वात्मना अहंभावेन यतो भान्ति ततः पूर्णाः ;-अपरिच्छिन्नस्वरूपेयत्ताकाः, यतः स्वात्मा तस्य तथाभूत एव ... । Ibid. I.

and appears in the state of emanation with reference to those manifestations which are about to come into being. The same Power appears as constituting the state of absorption, when appearing as the destroyer of the previously manifested objects. The state of beginning of manifestation might be regarded as an awakening of the outward consciousness of the subject and the state of disappearance as the awakening of the inward consciousness.[1] However, in reality He alone, who essentially is nothing more than the five powers of creation etc., shines.[2] At one particular time, He brings about identity with particular subjects, imposes obscuration by obscuring perfection or essential nature, bestows favour by bestowing perfection insofar as He makes the identity of the subject shine in relation to the limited manifestation. Thus, the Lord always performs the five functions, not only in case of cosmic creation, destruction etc., but also in practical life.[3]

Creation at the higher level is different from the creation at the lower level. At the higher level, creation is the manifestation of the state in which the entire manifestables exist in a potential or subtle form. There is no spacio-temporal succession during this state of manifestation. In it all the manifestables are one with self-consciousness and are illumined as one with it.[4] For the knowledge of one's own self is direct and immediate and does not follow any process. The variety of manifestations shine to the limited subject alone. It does not shine to the universal subject who is perfect.[5] That which is integral and one in the sphere of higher consciousness appears as successive and different in the realm of finite consciousness.

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1. SN I. 1.
2. IPV. II. iv. 10.
3. तेन न केवलं महासृष्टिषु महास्थितिषु महाप्रलयेषु प्रकोपतिरोधानेषु दीक्षाज्ञानाद्यनुग्रहेषु भगवतः कृत्यपञ्चकयागः यावत् सततमेव व्यवहारेऽपि ।
Ibid. I. vi, 7.
4. SD. 1.
5. IPV. II. i. 6-7.

The universal is not absolutely consumed when, on the occasion of a particular destruction, it is devoured by consciousness, but continues in a potential state. Later on, at the time of a new creation, it arises again from the potential state. This is also seen in the personal experience of all finite subjects. Every subject possesses a similar power of devouring the objects at the time of sleep and manifesting them again when he wakes up.[1]

In the transcendental state (*parā avasthā*), the subject holds within itself the unmanifest universe as His ideal experience. In the perfect apprehension of Supreme Egoity, all objects shine in identity with the subject.[2] There is no feeling of want and the consequent rise of 'will' in the Subject who is all perfect. But, when there arises a tendency towards self-forgetfulness, there appears a limitation in the infinite bliss of self-consciousness. This limitation in the perfect experience gives rise to the creative will which is the whole universe in its unmanifest state. The limitation or negation of the Supreme Bliss gives rise to the state prior to desire, from which spring all desires. Henceforth starts the search for perfection or the blissful supreme egoity and thus begins the entire process of evolution and involution.

Thus, creation which consists in the objectification of consciousness begins owing to the rise of a feeling of want or desire This feeling takes place when the Supreme Self manifests itself through its own free will as limited.[3] This state has been described in various systems as Śūnyatā, vacuity, indeterminateness, avidyā etc. It represents a slight vibration in the dynamic nature of free consciousness which in itself is both dynamic and static simultaneously. It produces the universe out of itself, just as the Banyan seed produces the Banyan tree.[4] It might also be described as the state of apparent forgetfulness, self-negation or self-

1. PH. p. 68.
2. SD. I. 10.
3. SD. 10.
4. PH. IV.

concealment, contraction or limitation (*ātmakhyāti, tirodhāna,* and *saṁkochana*) of the absolute self-consciousness. The Divine Śakti manifests the universe after concealing or obscuring the experience of Supreme Egoity. This state of limitation or negation of consciousness is the source of all subsequent tension, unrest and struggle. As Sri Aurobindo says, at this state the infinite consciousness loses itself in the appearance of non-being and emerges in the appearance of a finite soul, infinite consciousness loses itself in the apearance of a vast indeterminate and emerges in the appearance of a superficially limited consciousness. The infinite self-sustaining force loses itself in the appearance of insensible matter and emerges in the appearance of discordant rhythm of varied pain, pleasure and neutral feeling, love, hatred and indifference; infinite unity loses itself in the appearance of a chaos of multiplicity and emerges in a discord of forces and being which seek to recover unity by possessing, dissolving and devouring each other.[1]

The process of manifestation represents a gradual bifurcation of the unity of Śiva and Śakti, being and becoming, bodha and svātantrya. These various forms of manifestation of consciousness have been classified into thirty-six categories or *tattvas*. The exact number of these categories is a subject of dispute among the Śaivites. Counting the transcendent and immanent forms of Śiva separately, Abhinava Gupta advocates thirty seven categories. But Utpalāchārya does not accept the categories to be thirty seven[2] According to Abhinava Gupta, the division of the manifested universe into categories is based neither wholly on empirical observation nor purely on logical analysis. It is based mainly on the authority of the Āgamas and is also partly a result of long Yogic experiments and careful study of mind and matter. It has to be noted that the objects of the world, characterised by sentiency or insentiency are simply manifestations. Therefore, the question arises as to what are the

1. LD. p. 103.
2. Pandey, K. C., op. cit. pp. 363-4, 525.

categories under which they are subsumed ? The direct perception of the finite subject does not lead us anywhere and similar is the case with inference, because we cannot have the knowledge of distinguishing characteristics and invariable concomitances of all things. But Āgama in its essence is simply the determinate thought of the Highest Lord, who is unlimited pure light of knowledge. Nothing is, therefore, beyond its view. Hence the group of categories is based on the authority of the Śaiva Āgamas and is also supported by reason.[1]

This group of categories begins with Śiva and ends with earth.[2] Each one of these categories is a single ābhāsa or universal, and the entire domain of bodies and worlds etc., which is consequent upon the peculiar combinations of these ābhāsas, which give rise to the innumerable definite objects, is due to the fact that all ābhāsas rest on one common basis.[3]

A tattva may be defined as that which lasts through the dissolution of the universe and is always present in its effects or collocations. Being mere manifestations of the absolute, these tattvas are essentially identical with their source. Tattvas are not dependent upon the finite subject. They constitute the fundamental or basic elements of the universe. Being a constituent of Universe, a tattva has two aspects, the macrocosm and microcosm. In its former aspect it pervades the universe and in its latter aspect it signifies a constituent element of body-apparatus.[4] A collocation

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1, के च ते विश्वे पदार्था:, इति। तत्राभासरूपा एव जडचेतनलक्षणा: पदार्थास्ते च कियता रूपेण संगृह्यन्ते, नहि प्रत्यक्षं मायाप्रमातु: सर्वंत्र क्रमते। अनुमानमप्येवम्, न हि यद्यदस्ति तत्र तत्र लिंगव्याप्त्यादिगहण-संभव:। आगमस्त्वपरिच्छिन्नप्रकाशात्मकमाहेश्वरविमर्शपरमार्थ: किं न पश्येत्....। Bhāskarī, vol. II, pp. 212-13.

2. श्रीमत्सदाशिवोदारप्रारम्भं वसुधान्तकम्।
यदन्तर्भाति तत्त्वानां चक्रं तं संस्तुम: शिवम्॥ Ibid. II, p. 211.

3. Pandey, K. C., op. cit. p. 357.

4. Sen, Sarma, Devabrata, The Conception of Tattva—A Study, *Gopīnath Kaviraj Abhinandan Granth*.

is said to belong to one category or the other in so far as a particular tattva forms its basis by being the chief constituent of it. The process of manifestation of tattvas may be described as a gradual objectification of the Subject. These tattvas are separate neither from Śiva nor from each other. For, in each tattva all other tattvas are present. Just as the higher tattvas include and involve all the lower tattvas, the lower tattvas also include within them all the higher tattvas. The separate manifestation of a particular tattva only means its individual shining on the background of the unity of consciousness. In the absence of this background, nothing would shine. The fact is that Parama Śiva stands behind and above all these tattvas as their one and supreme synthesis.[1]

The tattvas are not subjective or psychological experiences. They were originally conceived in the Sāṁkhya as psychologically distinguishable stages of the progress of the individual. Later on, however, the Sāṁkhya became metaphysical in hypostating the tattvas into ontological entities.[2] The Śaiva absolutist holds that these tattvas are real and can be realised in Yogic experience. A large part of Śaiva literature is devoted to the demonstration of the evolution of these tattvas beginning from the highest state of reality to the lowest.

Amongst these tattvas, the twenty-five lower tattvas from Puruṣa to eartha, resemble the Sāṁkhya categories. The other eleven categories are accepted only in Śaivism. Of these, the first five categories represent the five powers or aspects of the Absolute. The remaining six represent the limitation of the individual soul. All the tattvas have been classified into three groups, viz. pure, pure-impure and impure, depending upon the nature of creation. The first five tattvas represent the sphere of pure creation because they are manifested directly by Śiva himself without involving any prompting cause.[3] The impure creation

1. Chatterjee, J. C., op. cit. p. 162.
2. Sastri, S. S. S., *Sāṁkhaya Kārikā of Īśvara Kṛṣṇa*, Intr. p. XVIII.
3. TA. VI. 55.

depends upon the instrumentality of Māyā. The intermediate order of creation, or the pure-impure creation, is so called as it is the state of manifestation of Māyā and is in between the pure and the impure. From another point of view, these tattvas are divided into three classes : Śiva tattva, Vidyā tattva and Ātma tattva. In the first class of tattvas are included the Śiva and Śakti tattvas ; Vidyā tattva includes Sadāśiva, Īśvara and Vidyā; Ātma tattva includes the remaining thirty-one tattvas from Māyā to the earth.

There are five kinds of supersensuous beings called Śāmbhava, Śāktaja, Mantra Maheśvara, Mantreśvara and Mantra, according as any of the five powers of Parama Śiva predominates in them.[1] The predominance of any one of these powers results in a certain state of consciousness, which is similar to that in which a Yogin descends from the transcendental state to the waking. In every manifestation of pure creation, however, all the five powers are essentially present, the difference being only of predominance of a particular power in a particular tattva. The *Śiva tattva* is the first manifestation of reality. In it the power of consciousness predominates. It is the state of experience of pure 'I.' The subjects who belong to this state are called *Śāmbhavas*. The *Śakti tattva* becomes manifest almost simultaneously with the Śiva tattva. As soon as the desire for creation takes place in the heart of the Lord, there arise the Śiva and Śakti tattvas. However, as consciousness presupposes being, the Śakti tattva is presupposed by Śiva tattva. The experience at the level of Śakti tattva assumes the form 'I am.' The Ānanda Śakti predominates in this state and the beings who belong to this state are called *Śāktajas*. At the level of *Sadāśiva tattva* the power of will becomes predominant. The experience in this state assumes the form 'I am this.' As it is the beginning of the manifestation of being, or the first stir of consciousness, it is

1. शाम्भवा: शक्तिजा: Ibid. VI. 52.

called *Sādākhya tattva*.[1] The experiencer in this stage is called *Mantra Maheśvara*. The whole universe constitutes an object of their experience. The *Īśvara tattva* is the state of manifestation wherein the power of knowledge predominates. The element of objectivity or *idaṁtā* becomes prominent in it The experience now assumes the form 'This I am.' It is called Īśvara tattva because here lordliness becomes more important than self-consciousness. While Sadāśiva is the state of internalisation of Śiva and Śakti, Īśvara is the state of their externalisation.[2] The *Sadvidyā* tattva is the state of manifestation in which the power of action becomes predominant. Here the subjective and the objective consciousness become equally manifest and the experience takes the form 'I am this.' It differs from the Vidyā tattva in as much as the latter constitutes a limitation of the finite subject.

So far we have considered only the pure order of creation. In this order, the experiencer realises his Universal nature and has an experience which is free from limitation. Accordingly, this order or realm of creation is also described as the sphere of true knowledge. Henceforth, the order of creation becomes impure inasmuch as the knowledge of reality becomes more and more obscured. Instead of unity, the consciousness of plurality becomes the dominant feature of the impure creation.

The *Māyā tattva* is the state of manifestation from which the unity of the subject becomes manifest as divided. Māyā is the principle of obscuration as well as of the manifestation of self.[3] It makes the universal self appear in the form of the finite self. It destroys the unity of the subject and object and manifests them as separate. The *Aham* element becomes manifest as Puruṣa and *Idam* as Prakṛti. In order that the absolute subject may appear

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1. सदाख्यायाश्च सदाशिवशब्दरूपा इदं वाच्यं तत्त्वम्। सृष्टिक्रमोपदेशादौ प्रथममुचितम्। तत्सादाख्यं तत्त्वम्। IPV. III. I. 2.
2. ईश्वरो बाह्यरुन्मेषो, निमेषोऽन्तः सदाशिवः। Ibid. 3.
3. TA, VI. 116.

as Puruṣa, Māyā also produces the five cloaks (Upādhis or Kañcukas). As it hides the true nature of the self, not only the five powers of the self but also the universe as a whole which was previousiy identical with the self becomes obscured.

Kalā tattva is the first product of Māyā. It partly restores to the self its power of action which has been obscured in the state of Māyā. Accordingly, it gives rise to finite doership and limits the omnipotence of the self. It is related to the individual self as its causal agent, and not as an instrument to an agent. The individual gets freedom from Karma and attains the state of Vijñānākala only when he is able to transcend this tattva.[1]

Vidyā is the limited power of knowledge, which gives rise to the finite knowership in place of omniscience. It is different from Buddhi tattva which is insentient. *Rāga* produces attachment in the individual for objects. Instead of the feeling of 'eternal satisfaction' it gives rise to finite desire in the soul. *Kāla* constitutes the limitation of the self in respect of time. Because of it, the eternal appears as temporal. Henceforth, consciousness becomes manifest with in time. *Niyati* is the power which limits the freedom of the subject as regards its causal efficiency. It controls the activities of the finite agent. These four tattvas are the effects of the *Kalā* tattva.[2]

When the absolute subject assumes the form of limited subject under the influence of Māyā and its cloaks, it is called *Puruṣa.* In this state, the self becomes limited and forgets its essential nature. In place of the original five supreme powers, viz. cit, ānanda etc., the soul now possesses the attributes of Kalā, Vidyā, etc., which in effect obstruct the true nature of the self. The Puruṣa assumes different names in different states of existence. When it identifies itself with the body etc., it is called

1. TA. VI, 143.
2. Ibid. VI, 161.

Deha Pramātā; when it is free from any association with the objects of the world, as in pralaya and deep sleep, it is called *Pralayākala;* when it is free from Karma, it is called *Vijñānākala.*

Prakṛti is the first purely objective manifestation. It is an effect of Kāla. It is as innumerable as the Puruṣa. Buddhi is the tattva which receives the reflection of the light of the self from within as well as of the objects from without. Ahaṅkāra arises due to the superimposition of the self on Buddhi[1] and thus is a product of Buddhi. *Manas* is the product of Ahaṅkāra.

The remaining tattvas are : the five sense organs called *Jñānendriyas*, viz. the powers of smell (*Ghrāṇa*), taste (*Rasa*), seeing (*Cakṣu*), touch (*Sparśa*), hearing (*Sravaṇa*); the five organs of action are five *Karmendriyas*, viz. resting and enjoying (*Upasthendriya*), rejection (*Payvindriya*), locomotion (*Padendriya*), handling (*Hastendriya*), voicing (*Vāgendriya*)*;* the five subtle elements (*Tanmātras*), viz. smell (*Gandha*), taste (*Rasa*), form (*Rūpa*), touch (*Sparśa*) and sound (*Śabda*); the five gross elements arise from the subtle elements; ether (*Ākāśa*); is manifest, from sound; Sparśa from air (*Vāyu*), Rūpa from fire (*Agni*), taste from water (*Jala*), Gandha from earth (*Pṛthvi*). The first three of these groups originate from Ahaṅkāra, with the predominance of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas respectively, and the fourth group, viz., the five gross elements, is the effect of the preceding group of Tanmātras.

Here, even if we admit the possibility of the above mentioned process of self-manifestation, the question arises as to why should the absolute manifest itself ? What is that motive or purpose which impels the all perfect Parama Śiva to forget his real nature ? What makes Him indulge in the game of self-concealment, self-limitation or suffering ?

Manifestation of the absolute as limited obviously cannot be due to any compulsion or pressure. It would be con-

1. Ibid. 185.

tradictory to hold that the absolute is compelled to appear in the phenomenal form. The only plausible explanation of His being manifest in the world would be to regard creation as a play or a self-amusement of the absolute. 'Perhaps, it is His pretension of acting as undivine, of putting on such appearance like the mask or make-up of an actor, solely for the purpose of enjoying the drama.'[1] No other purpose can be attributed to the creative will of the Lord except that it is a manifestation of His sporting nature, which makes him indulge in the game of 'hide-and-seek.' First, He throws himself into the world process and becomes a Saṁsārin. Then, after passing through the ordeals of the play, He returns to Himself. This might be compared to the sportive behaviour of a king who, inspite of his being very rich and having many servants, becomes a pedestrian and himself runs on foot while playing the game. In order to play, the king forgets that he is the monarch and assumes the limitation of an ordinary man. If he is always conscious of his being a king, no game would be possible. Likewise, the Lord, though perfect and enjoying the Supreme Bliss, puts limitations on Himself and manifests the plurality of subjects and objects and enjoys the game of five functions.[2]

But, why should there arise even the will or desire in the Lord who is supreme and perfect ? The world play cannot be for the sake of doing good to creatures, as it would amount to putting the cart before the horse. Neither can it be held that it is for the sake of self-enjoyment or self-satisfaction, for the absolute is Saccidānanda itself. Thus the desire for creation seems to imply an imperfection or limitation in the nature of the absolute and is contradictory to its nature.

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1. LD. p. 369.
2. यथैश्वर्यचमत्कारवासितः सार्वभौमो राजा निरर्गलतया क्रीडया तल्लक्षण-स्वभावापत्तो: पदातिसंबन्धिचेष्टितानि आचरति, तथा परमेश्वरः पूर्णत्वात् स्वत आनन्दघूर्णितैस्तैर्भूतभेदात्मभिः प्रकारैरेवमेतत्सदृशं क्रीडति। हर्षानुसारी स्पन्दः क्रीडा। SD. I. 37-8.

In answer to this, the Śaivite points out that it is His very nature to indulge in the sport of five functions. It is due to His creative nature that He enters into the bodies of finite beings and enjoys pleasures and suffers.[1] It would rather be strange if some one were to ask why fire burns. For, the nature of a thing cannot be questioned. Just as it is the very nature of fire to burn, similarly it is the very nature of the Self to know itself determinately as 'this.' As He does not enjoy His being alone, therefore, He manifests Himself into the various forms of subject and object.[2] Owing to this self-limiting nature, the Lord is ever busy in the function of self-concealment and self-realisation.[3] Moreover, if the absolute did not manifest itself, it would no longer be the Self but would be reduced to the level of an object. 'If the highest reality did not manifest itself in infinite variety, but remained cooped up within its solid singleness, it would neither be the highest power nor consciousness, but something like a jar.'[4]

Just as milk naturally flows out of the breast of a mother due to the intense love or happiness aroused at the sight of the child, similarly the infinite bliss of Supreme Egoity naturally overflows and throws itself out, due to its own free will, into the game of the five functions. The scriptures also declare that 'all beings are born out of ānanda, exist in ānanda and merge back in it.' Such an overflow of ānanda is the very nature of the absolute bliss of the Self. The absoluteness of Being-Consciousness is unlimited Bliss, the joy of self-existence; and it is the overflow of joy, the infinity of bliss, which spontaneously throws itself out and seeks self-enjoyment in the game of hide and seek. Just as the force of consciousness of reality throws itself into forms of infinite and endless variations,

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1. Ibid.
2. PS. pp. 73-74.
3. चिद्घनोऽपि जगन्मूर्त्या श्यानो यः स जयत्यजः ।
स्वात्मप्रच्छादनक्रीडाविदग्धः परमेश्वरः ॥ PS. p. 1.
4. T. A. II. 100.

so also self-delight is capable of revealing in that infinite flux and mutability of itself represented by numberless teeming universes.[1]

Can this spontaneously overflowing ānanda itself be regarded as a conscious process ? If it is not a conscious process, does it not follow that the whole process of manifestation is essentially unconscious or material ? To this, the Śaivite replies that the 'will' is identical with, or included in, the overflowing ānanda. Will is only a later manifestation of ānanda. Therefore, the process at this stage cannot be regarded as a determinately willed process. It cannot be described as a conscious process, as it is a superconscious process. Instead of employing some kind of limitation, the will shows the Supreme glory of the Lord. For, it is a product of infinite bliss and does not arise due to want or shortage. Unlike the logical process of the Hegelian absolute, through which the absolute becomes richer and fuller, the *līlā* of Parama Śiva does not aim at any achievement. It is merely a spontaneous expression of the infinite Bliss.

The creative will being the necessary manifestation of the infinite bliss, creation might be regarded as a natural or necessary development of the absolute. But, if the process is necessary on His part, does it not imply a limitation of His freedom ? How can freedom and necessity go together ? It appears to be impossible to reconcile the necessity of manifestation with the concept of Divine Freedom. The Śaiva absolutist attempts to avoid this dfficulty by asserting that this very fact, that He manifests Himself as limited and yet remains absolutely perfect, shows the freedom of the Lord. The strange and mysterious appearances could be accounted for only on the view that the absolute is essentially free.[2] Being eternally free and perfect, Parama Śiva can have no real want or desire; it

1. LD, p. 87.
2. IPV., II. iv. 4.

is His very nature to manifest the world.[1] His freedom constitutes the capacity to bring about manifestations which appear impossible and paradoxical to the finite subject.

Though the Vedāntin also regards Brahman's creative activity to be a mere sport, yet he holds that the theory of real creation cannot be logically maintained. The view that Brahman really creates or manifests itself would imply division in the nature of Brahman and would make it a being of complex nature. Like all composite beings, it would also become perishable, i.e. it would be subject to origin, decay and destruction. If it is said that there is no difference of parts in Brahman, then it cannot be regarded both as being and becoming. If Śakti manifests itself in the world, and if Śiva and Śakti are identical, it means that Śiva Himself becomes manifest. But if it is held that the absolute remains perfect even after manifesting itself in the world, then we should explain how it is possible. Either the absolute becomes modified in the process of manifestation or the process itself becomes unreal. To maintain the identity of the absolute, we have to accept that the absolute remains unmodified inspite of its being manifest through various forms, like the individual who remains identical in and through the various mental modifications. Here the question would arise as to whether this manifestation is exclusive or inclusive to the absolute. It cannot be regarded as exclusive, for it would amount to a surrender of absolutism. Nor can it be inclusive, for then it would introduce difference in the heart of the absolute. Nor can it be said that there is change in one aspect and changelessness in the other, as it would give rise to the question of relation between these aspects. Further, are these aspects essential to the absolute or not? If the former be the case, it would be difficult to explain how change in one aspect does not affect the other. In the

1. स्वभाव एव एष देवस्य, यत् तां तामपि अवस्थाम् आपन्नः स्वरूपरूपः सन् सर्वत्र अनुभवितृतया प्रथते,—इत्येतदेव स्वातन्त्र्यम् । PS. p. 74.

latter case, change would become merely accidental- And change being accidental to it, the absolute should not be regarded as essentially the Creator. Its creatorship would be merely accidental.

Hence the Vedāntin holds that the changing aspect of the absolute is merely an accident; only the changeless aspect constitutes its essential nature. It would not be possible to maintain the absoluteness of the absolute on any other view. It is necessary to draw a distinction between the accidental and essential nature of Brahman according to the Vedāntin. In order to preserve the freedom and purity of the absolute, it is all the more necessary to hold that manifestation of Brahman is purely accidental. According to the Vedāntic theory of causation, *Vivartavāda*, the unchanging cause gives rise to the changing effects. That which changes is unreal; the real is that which does not change.

A critical examination of the power or potency which gives rise to the manifestation of the world reveals that it is an unique, inscrutable or inexplicable mystery. At best, it can be regarded as the principle of ignorance or cosmic illusion, having no independent existence of its own. It is the source, or the self-producing material cause, of the cosmic illusion. Through the agency of this principle, Brahman appears as the multiplicity of objects. Brahman is the Creator of the world only in the sense of being its ground. Although the production of the insentient from the sentient appears to be strange, the notion of Brahman cannot be discarded.[1] This creativity of Brahman is a mere sport or *līlā*. 'Just as in the world a rich man who has no wants acts, without any specific purpose, only for the sake of play, so also the creativity of the Lord is due to His *līlā*.'[2]

The theory of limitation or self-concealment of the absolute has been propounded, both by the Śaivite and the

1. SB. II. ix. 3
2. Ibid.

Vedāntin, in order to explain the possibility of its manifestation. While in the Śaiva absolutism self-limitation is taken to be a real manifestation of the absolute, in the Vedānta it merely denotes an apparent conditioning of Brahman. Although the illustration of crystal, mirror etc., prominently figure in both the systems, their uses are, however, different. Through the help of these illustrations, the Śaivite tries to show how the one can appear as many and yet remain one. But the Vedāntin's intention is to illustrate how something can appear in something without really belonging to it and how the attributes do not really belong to the substance. According to him, the one space is given different names owing to its adjuncts (*Upādhis*), while in itself it is ever unaffected. Similarly, the absolute, though apparently suffering from limitations at the time of manifestation, does not really undergo any limitation.[1] This contact of limitation is akin to the suffusion of the crystal by the red colour with which it is associated.[2] The Vedāntin claims that the theory of illusory creation is in conformity with experience. A mixing of the subject and object, being and becoming, and so on, is the very basis of practical life. In the illustration of the rope-snake, shell-silver etc., we find instances of illusory creation. The sea and the waves, the clay and the pots, the crystal and its reflection, appear different, though really non-different. Similarly Brahman and the world, though really non-different, appear for all practical purposes as different.

The fact is that the Vedāntin is not interested in explaining the world. The function of cosmology in the Vedānta is merely to establish the non-duality of Brahman by showing the absolute dependence of the world upon it.[3] On the other hand, the Śaivite is anxious to establish the integral nature of the absolute. He, therefore, holds that

1. Ibid I. ii. 5.
2. Ibid. III. ii. 15.
3. Śaṁkar's Comm. on M. K. I. 7.

as the finite cannot grasp the integrality of Being, there appear conflicts, contradictions or paradoxes in thought. They are completely harmonised in the higher vision of Reality. If the Infinite cannot be logically conceived, it would be illogical to impose the limitations of the finite logic upon the Infinite. What appears impossible to the finite need not be so to the Infinite. Even if the world appears to be illusory, it has been manifested by the Lord Himself. The manifestation of the world is indeed due to ignorance, but ignorance itself is due to the power of freedom of the Lord.[1] As the separate manifestation of the entire mass of objects itself is beyond reason, therefore the entire objectivity is called Māyā which is the power of freedom of Consciousness in objective manifestation.[2]

3. The Problem of Evil

The theory that creation is a manifestation of the free will of the absolute seems to be irreconcilable with the presence of evil in the created world. Those systems which regard creation to be a sport or *līlā*, a spotaneous manifestation of the self-delight of the absolute, find it dlfficult to explain the manifestation of evil in the world. For, if the world is the manifestation of supreme bliss, of saccidānanda, how is it possible that there is evil in the manifestation of saccidānanda ? If everything, whether manifest or unmanifest, is in its essential nature identical with Saccidānanda, how can we account for the existence of suffering ? How does evil originate from that which is the Supreme Good ? If the absolute creates the world, and if in its essential nature it is the home of all values, it appears to be difficult to admit why His creatures should be condemned to live a life in the world where all sorts of evil reign supreme. Having been a witness to, and often a victim of, the innumerable sufferings, hardships and injustices in the blissful manifestation of the Saccidānanda, it would be quite natural for men to refuse to believe in

1. IPV. II. iii. 17.
2. Ibid. I. v.. 18.

the Supreme Lord. It would be in the fitness of things if the creature spits on the face of such a devilish and omnipotent creator who amuses himself in creating a world full of evil.[1] The divine creature who applies the existence and conduct in this creation as a standard to judge his creatures, is really more cruel than the creatures. For, one who invents torture as a means of test or ordeal stands convicted either of deliberate cruelty or of moral insensibility and, if a moral being at all, is inferior to the highest instincts of His own creatures.[2]

Evil cannot be regarded merely as a product of the acts performed by the individuals, as being due to a working of the law of Karma. For, it appears to be difficult to explain how, why and whence the law started. Being Himself the creator of the individual as well as of the law, God can be held responsible for creating such individuals who are easily tempted by evil. Being omnipotent and good, God might have easily adjusted the feelings of His creatures in sueh a way that they might not fall an easy victim to evil. The question naturally arises as to who created, or why or whence was created, that moral evil which entails the punishment of pain and suffering ? If moral evil is regarded as a form of mental disease or ignorance, who or what created this law or inevitable connection which punishes a mental disease or act of ignorance by such terrific tortures ?[3] The law of Karma from all accounts appears to be irreconcilable with a supremely moral and good God.

Some philosophers hold that Reality is supra-ethical. According to them evil and good are not ultimate, but relative factors which lose their special characteristics in the whole. Evil exists only from the point of view of the finite individual. It does not exist in the Absolute, which is the

1. Radhakrishnan, S., *Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, pp. 147, 397.
2. LD., I. p. 118.
3. Ibid.

Saccidānanda. It is the Saccidānanda who manifests Himself in the different states of existence, such as infra-ethical, ethical and supra-ethical. Evil emerges only at a particular state of manifestation and is ultimately transformed in the Supreme Bliss.[1] All the difficulties concerning the problem of evil arise due to the false assumption that the Creator is different from the creature, thus implying that He indifferently watches the suffering of His own creatures. But the fact is that Reality being the integral unity, the suffering creature is non-different from the Creator. It is the Absolute who Himself appears as the creature in the world. Accordingly, it is he alone who bears the suffering, and thus the question of the creator merely watching the suffering of His creatures does not arise. However, another question arises here : how is it that the Saccidānanda allows Himself to undergo suffering ? How is it that the Blissful Lord appears to negate His very nature ? If it is supposed that He becomes involved in the game of suffering without really willing it, then it means that He is not all-powerful. On the other hand, if He manifests Himself as limited without fully knowing the implications of it, He cannot be an omniscient God. In either case, the manifestation of the absolute as the finite individual is against the very nature of the Absolute.

In answer to this, the absolutist holds that in reality the sum of pleasure far exceeds the sum of evil. On the whole, evil does not remain evil, but merges in the absolute. Evil is evil only from the finite point of view. It has no absoluteness in itself. If evil becomes absolute, it loses its very nature. If pain becomes immeasurable, it ends itself or ends that in which it manifests, or collapses into insensibility or, in rare circumstances, it may turn into ecstacy of ānanda. If evil became sole and immeasurable it would destroy the world or destroy that which bore or supported it; it would bring things and itself back by disintegration into non-existence.[2]

1. Misra, R. S., op. cit., pp. 147-8.
2. LD. I. p. 539.

Evil is not positive, it is dependent upon the Good. The relationship between evil and good is like shadow and light; like shadow, evil depends on good for its existence but good, like light, does not depend for its existence on evil.[1] But this explanation of evil is not satisfactory. For, evil cannot just be swallowed up in the good. The fact that in itself it is evil is undeniable. The suffering of the moment cannot be rejected as mere illusion or privation. It is a fact that people suffer commit sin and are disillusioned. It is no good to say that on the whole evil is transformed in the good.

The Śaiva Absolutist holds that manifestation, whether evil or good, is nothing but an expression of the absolute. Accordingly, there is nothing like evil in the world. Somānanda states that the world of manifestation is an emanation of Divine nature. Everything including darkness or evil is Śiva. The individual who suffers and the evil which he suffers from both are non-different from the Absolute. From the ultimate point of view, suffering and enjoyment, pain and pleasure, evil and good are essentially one.[2] The entire universe, from Śiva to earth, flashes in identity with the Blissful Parama Śiva. He transcends and is at the same time identical with the universe and consists of highest bliss.[3] Because of His nature, He is always engaged in performing the five functions. No particular motive can be attributed to His creative will which is essentially spontaneous. A distinction can be made between various manifestations only in the realm of practical life. In reality all manifestations are expressions of the absolute delight. It is the ignorance of this identity of manifestations which gives rise to the experience of evil. Evil is an indication of separation or disintegration. The same evil is transformed into good in the integrality or unity of being.

1. Ibid, pp. 532-56.
2. SD. p. 14.
3. PH. III.

According to the Śaiva Absolutist, Parma Śiva alone is the sufferer as well as the enjoyer in heaven and hell.[1] Limitation, finitude or suffering can be accounted for on the theory of self-limitation of the absolute. The main difference of Śaiva Absolutism from other systems lies in the fact that Parama Śiva by His very nature performs the five functions.[2] Owing to His sportive nature, Parama Śiva always passes through the ordeal of cosmic evolution and involution. He has been brought down to the state of slavery because He does not take rest even for a moment in His own real nature.[3]

The Vedāntin holds that the Absolute cannot be blamed for inequality of dispensation or cruelty because he is bound by regards. Pain, pleasure and suffering, etc., are due to the merits and demerits of individuals who are the creatures of Avidyā. Just as the cloud, which rains equally on all lands cannot be blamed for the unequal yields of different lands, for this difference is mainly owing to the nature of seed, soil etc., so also the Lord, who is the substrate and support of the world, cannot be blamed for evil etc. The objection as to how the individual inequality of merit, demerit, pleasure, pain etc., can begin, as prior to creation distinctions do

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1. क्रीडया दु:खवेद्यानि कर्मकारीणि तत्फलै:
संभत्स्यमानानि तथा नरकार्णवगह्वरे ॥
निवासीनि शरीराणि गृह्णाति परमेश्वर: ।
परमेश्वरो नरकेऽपि स एवास्ते, नतु तदतिरिक्त: कश्चिदस्तीत्यैक्यमेव स्थिरीकृतम् । SD. I. 36-7.
एतदेवहि अस्यान्यवादिभ्यो विशेष:, यत्सततमेव पञ्चकृत्यविधानमिति । Ibid. FN. 1, p. 15.
इह ईश्वराद्वयदर्शनस्य ब्रह्मवादिभ्य: अयमेव विशेष:···श्रीमत्स्वच्छन्दादिशासनोक्तनीत्या सदा पञ्चविध कृत्यकारित्वं चिदात्मनो भगवत: । PH. pp. 61-4.
एवम् अख्यातिबलात् आगतं स्वात्मनो देहाद्यावरणं, तत् पुनरपि ख्यातिबलात् विनश्यति, -इति स्वविकल्पकलित इयान् दोष:··· । PS. p. 73.
2. Ibid. p. 15.
3. SN. III. 14.

not exist, is baseless. For, the world has no beginning according to the Vedānta.[1] And, as the world has no beginning, merit, demerit, equality, inequality are like seed and sprout, cause as well as effect. Hence, there can be no valid objection to their operation. Moreover, it is also unreasonable to regard the world as having a beginning. For, if it were so, then without merit and demerit nobody can have existence, and again without a body, merit and demerit cannot be formed, so that we would be led into a logical see-saw. But no such difficulty remains on the doctrine of the beginninglessness of the world.[2] Prakṛti, or Māyā, forms a part of the nature of Īśvara, the lower Brahman. Māyā, the world principle, is itself not an effect; it is superior to all effects.[3] The world as an effect persists even before it is manifest, as the Divine power of creation.[4] The Lord having regard to the inequality of the virtuous and vicious actions, allotts to them the corresponding results. If it is held that in its activity the soul is dependent upon God and therefore the soul cannot act freely, the Vedāntin points out that though the soul is not independent insofar as the Lord causes it to act, yet it acts by itself. The Lord in causing the soul to act has regard to its former existence, having regard to its efforts previous to that existence, a regression against which, considering the eternity of the world, no valid objection can be raised [5]

The Śaiva and the Vadānta absolutists try to solve the problem of evil in accordance with their fundamental approaches. In the Śaiva view, there is no evil as such in reality. Like Bradley, Bosanquet, Aurobindo and others, the Śaivites hold that evil is really transformed in the Absolute. Evil does not exist at the level of absolute consciousness, It is the freedom of the absolute which brings about the

1. SB. II. i. 35.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. I. ii. 22.
4. Ibid. II. i. 6. Śaṁkara's Comm. on Kaṭh. Up. III. ii ; Chhānd. Up. VIII. 14. 1.
5. Ibid.

manifestation of such contradictory phenomena as pleasure and pain, joy and suffering, light and darkness etc. However, in reality they are essentially of the nature of ānanda. To the finite consciousness, they appear in their limited form as pleasure, pain, etc. To the absolute consciousness, they appear identical with the bliss of self-consciousness. The Vedāntin, on the other hand, attempts to explain evil by denying the reality of creation. Not being the cause of the creation of the world, which is beginningless, Brahman cannot be held responsible for the presence of evil in the world. Evil is due to the merits and demerits of the individuals. Just as the absolute space appears to be limited in the form of pot etc., so also appears the unlimited Brahman due to ignorance.

4. The Eternal Perfection of the Absolute and the Finite Process.

Absolutism has to face the problem that either the Absolute loses its identity in the process of manifestation or the process becomes unreal. It seems impossible to reconcile the perfection of the Absolute with its manifestation in the phenomenal world. It would be contradictory to hold that the Absolute undergoes any change in its nature. In order to avoid this difficulty, some absolutists hold that absolutism implies a theory of illusion. According to them, the finite process would have to be regarded as illusory in order to preserve the identity of the absolute. We have to admit, in some sense or other, the ultimate unreality of the world process. The finite appearances cannot belong to the Absolute without reducing it to a mere bundle of incongruant entities. In order to have the infinite, we have to renounce the finite. We cannot have both at the same time. If we stick to the reality of the finite, we would have to give up the Infinite. Absolutism can be maintained only if the finite process is regarded as ultimately unreal. For this it has to be admitted that the cause produces the effects without really undergoing any change in its nature. In the case of the illusory manifestation, the cause is not at all affected by the production,

existence and destruction of the effect. The theory according to which effect is merely an illusory manifestation is, therefore, the fundamental basis of absolutism. The Mādhyamika and the Vedānta absolutists subscribe to this view and maintain that the reality of the finite process cannot be reconciled with the essential nature of the absolute. Both of them emphasize the perfection of the absolute at the cost of the finite process.

But what about those absolutists who regard the finite process to be real ? How far is it possible to maintain both the eternal unchanging Absolute and the changing finite process ? For, it is difficult to conceive how the world process can be real without in any way affecting or modifying the absolute.[1] If the absolute is eternally perfect, if it is completely unaffected by the finite process, in what sense does the 'process' take place ? If the Absolute is wholly unrelated to the process, does it not mean that the latter is illusory ? If the absolute could produce the world process through self-manifestation and yet remain unmodified and self-identical, what does manifestation really mean ? The only plausible explanation would be that the absolute is somehow accidentally associated with the process; it does not really undergo any process of self-manifestation. This is exactly the case in the illustration of rope-snake causation. The rope as cause remains unmodified during the three states of manifestation of its effect (viz. the snake). This is possible because the rope is merely a supporting cause of its effect. Otherwise, if it really becomes transformed or modified, it would be giving up its real nature. That is why even those absolutists who want to maintain the reality of the finite process are ultimately forced to admit that somehow it is illusory. But the Śaiva absolutists, like the Hegelians, insist that there is no contradiction in maintaining both the eternal perfection of the absolute and the reality of the finite process. According to them, Parama Śiva, even after manifesting the world, remains unmodified like

1. Raju, P. T., *Thought and Reality*, p. 159.

the sky which is not defiled by clouds, smoke or dust.[1] Although He appears as impure or imperfect, in reality He is always pure and perfect.[2] Creation, maintenance and dissolution, waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep, appear in Him in the Fourth state (Turīya), but He reveals Himself under their covering.[3] These conditions are present as phenomena in the consciousness of the Lord in the fourth state in which He is pure bliss. It is the state of infinite egoity from which the phenomena of the three lower states of consciousness originate. Their manifestation, however, does not suppress the real nature of the Lord who reveals himself everywhere as higher than these, as the universal subject of cognition under all conditions.[4]

Even when He conceals Himself, His essential nature remains unaffected like the sun who is really not covered by the covering of the clouds produced by it. In this case the covering itself is illumined by the light of the sun. The objection that the manifestation of woıld as different from the Absolute would violate *ādvaitism* cannot be validly raised here. For, though the world is essentially non-different

1. जलधर-धूम-रजोभि-
 मंलिनीक्रियते यथा न गगनतलम् ।
 तद्वन्मायाविकृतिभि-
 रपरामृष्टः परः पुरुषः ॥
 एकस्मिन् घटगगने
 रजसा व्याप्ते भवन्ति नान्यानि ।
 मलिनानि तद्वदेते
 जीवाः सुःख-दुःखभेदजुषः ॥ PS. Kārikā, 36-7.
 Also pp. 36, 81-85. Bhāskarī II. pp. 220-6.
2. Ibid. pp. 171-3.
3. सृष्टि स्थिति-संहारा
 जाग्रत्स्वप्नौ सुषुप्तमिति तस्मिन् ।
 भान्ति तुरीये धामनि
 तथापि तैर्नावृतं भाति ॥ Ibid. Kārikā 34.
4. Ibid.

from the Absolute, it is manifest as different like the objects which appear as different in the reflection of a mirror.[1] Like the image in the mirror, the Universe is in a sense void of distinction and is not distinct from the light in which it is revealed, nevertheless, it appears as a manifold of experience, as internally differentiated complex of subject and object. The aggregates are not differentiated as regards the absolute. They are differentiated only from the point of view of the finite subject who is in the realm of Māyā. But this differentiation also actually constitutes an illusion, the non-recognition of *advaita*. Due to this illusion there arises the conception of imperfection and duality in Him.[2] In reality, the manifest universe is nothing but the external manifestation of things which lie merged in consciousness. It is in its essential nature like the limited manifestation of an individual at the time of dream, remembrance, imagination, etc.[3] Both before and after their separate manifestation, the ābhāsas are within the absolute just as the waves are within the sea. And as there is no substantial change in the sea due to the manifestation of the waves, similarly there is no real modification of consciousness because of the ābhāsas. According to the Śaiva absolutist change is only an ideal process. It does

1. ततो भिन्नं चेत् जगत् भासते, तदा अद्वयवादखण्डना; अभिन्नं चेत्, 'जगत प्रकाशते' इति कथं वाचो युक्तिः ? इति दृष्टान्तद्वारेण तद्भेदाभेदरूपं तत्त्वम् उपदर्शयन् एतत्समर्थनाय आह—
दर्पणबिम्बे यद्वन् ।
नगरग्रामादि चित्रमविभागि ।
भाति विभागेनैव च
परस्परं दर्पणादपि च ॥
विमलतमपरमभैरव
बोधात् तद्वद् विभागशून्यमपि ।
अन्योन्यं च ततोऽपि च
विभक्तमाभाति जगदेतत् ॥ PS. Kārika 12-13, p. 35.
2. Ibid. pp. 35-4, 75.
3. IPV. I. 7.

not involve any substantial modification of that which appears as changing. Each constituent ābhāsa is a separate entity and as such it is ever the same. All talk of change merely refers to the combination of these ābhāsas. A spontaneous overflow of ānanda leads to infinite creations without implying any change in the essential nature of the absolute. Just as clouds, smoke, dust etc., though in the sky, do not affect the natural purity of the sky, nor do they violate its identity and eternity, but merely qualify the sky like the reflections in a mirror, similarly the Self is not affected by the modifications of Māyā [1] Hence it has to be admitted that Consciousness never gives up its essential nature as a result of the manifestation of the world.[2] When water assumes a gross form and appears as ice, the latter, though really non-different from the former, also apparently conceals the water. However, the true nature of water is never concealed by the manifestation of ice, which always presupposes water for its very existence. This illustrates how some thing, which appears as concealing, does not really affect the true nature of the object concealed. Similarly, the actors who play different roles in the drama experience joy, suffering, pleasure and pain in these roles, without really undergoing any change in their real and original nature. Although, in so far as they enjoy different roles, the actors appear to give up their identity or the witness character, in reality they always remain in their original self. Likewise, the Self assumes different forms and carries on the sport of five functions without involving any real change in its nature.[3]

Human intellect seems to be incapable of providing a satisfactory answer to the question as to how the pure

1. तथैव 'मायाविकृतिभिः' अख्यातिसमुत्थैर्विकारैः नानाप्रमातृगतैर्जन्म-मरणाद्यनेकविचित्रावस्थामयैः भगवत्स्थैरपि भगवान् न 'परामृष्टः' न तैः अपहृतस्वरूपः··· । PS. p. 81.
2. तस्माद् न स्वसमुत्थैः अप्रकाशरूपैः मायाविकारैः ऐन्द्रजालिकवत् भगवतः काचित् खण्डना··· । Ibid. p. 82.
3. Kaviraj, Gopinath, *Bhāratiya Sanskriti aur Sādhanā*, p. 46.

indeterminate absolute can give rise to the determinate ideas. It is safer to accept both the states of the absolute, the eternal indeterminate pure knowledge state and the eternal nescientic determinations, as real. The state of eternal flux which is beyond the sphere of Māyā is real. But the highest state transcends both the eternal and the non-eternal (*nitya* and *anitya*). The Yogins realise that in the absolute eternity and moment become one and that there is no succession in the absolute unity which is the source of all manifestation. The absolute consciousness appears in innumerable forms and yet remains self-identical. After all everywhere in the innumerable experiences of joy, suffering, etc., it is the light alone which shines. Even the insentient is nothing but a manifestation of consciousness. The inexhaustible character of the infinite consciousness is acknowledged by all. It is the endless source of all process or progress and is capable of assuming these forms without losing its identity.[1]

The perfection of the absolute consists in the supreme self-consciousness and it remains unaffected even after the manifestation of objectivity. Even when consciousness appears as objective it remains unaffected by these appearances [2] In the Śaiva view, both the internal as well as the external shining of the object depends upon the universal subject. Their shining within is not opposed to their shining without. Even when they are externally manifest, they remain internal to consciousness. For internality is nothing but oneness with consciousness and this oneness is always there, because that which is not one with light does not shine and is, therefore, nothing. Externality consists in 'this' consciousness, whereas rightly there should be 'I' consciousness. Thus, 'resting within' is nothing else than consciousness of the objective as 'I' and not as 'this,' a form which befits the sentient.[3]

1. IPV. II, iv. 19.
2. Ibid. I. i. 1.
3. बहीरूपतया आभासनेऽपि अहन्तारूपता न त्रुट्यति,··· ।
Bhaskarī, vol. I, pp. 236-37.

But, if the entirety of the phenomena is always one with consciousness, in what sense they might be regarded as being created or manifested by the Absolute ? The Śaiva answer to such questions consists in pointing out that the creation or manifestation of objects is nothing but their being determinately known, i.e. their being manifest in consciousness. If it is asked why the objects do not exercise their functional capacity in the state of their internality, the only answer is that because they are wholly one with consciousness, therefore, the functional capacity becomes manifest only in the state of externality. It is only during the state of their external existence that the exercise of functional capacity becomes possible.[1] The objection as to how can that which is essentially self-identical assume variety of forms cannot be raised here, because it is not any object which is so imagined. It is the *Saṁvid* itself which shines in this manner. For, its omnipotence consists in shining in this manner. No law of contradiction can operate in the case of shining itself. The contradiction between pleasure and pain, and so on, owes its being to shining.[2] Moreover, all finite subjects and objects shine in perfect form and action in every way in the state of Absolute Existence.[3] The Highest Lord, holding all that is objective within Himself and keeping the objective in its essential nature as one with Him, is perfect, because He is self-consciousness, the chief characteristic of which is resting within one's own self independently of everything else.[4]

Here, the question arises that the essential nature of action being succession and succession not being possible

1. IPV. I. viii. 6.
2. न चैतत् वाच्यम्-एकस्वरूपस्य कथम् अन्यत् अन्यद्रूपमिति ? यतो न असौ कश्चित् भावो य एवं कल्प्यते; संविदेव हि तथा भाति, तथा भानमेव च तस्या ऐश्वर्यम्, न हि भासने विरोधः कश्चित् प्रभवति, स हि सुखदुःखादेर्भासनकृत एव, तथाभासनाभाव एव हि विरोधतत्त्वम्··· । Bhāskarī, vol. II, pp. 17-19.
3. Ibid. II. i. 7.
4. Ibid. IV. i. 1.

in the Lord who is of the nature of pure consciousness, how can action be attributed to Him ? To this the Śaivite replies that only the empirical activity can be regarded to be successive. The eternal activity of the Highest Lord is not successive.[1] The objection of the opponent can be refuted by establishing the existence of the supreme subject. For, in the whole of the opponent's view, the main point on which all objections are based is that the one cannot assume diversity of forms. And in reply to this, it has been stated by the Śaiva absolutists that in the case of the subject, whose essential nature is sentiency, variety of manifestations is possible without contradicting its oneness, as it is in the case of mirror. Therefore, though the light of consciousness, which is the underlying reality of all objects, is one, because of its recognition as such, yet it assumes a variety of conflicting forms which shine in succession.[2]

But the view that consciousness alone shines in a variety of forms amounts to an admission that appearances are unreal. Even the Śaivite accepts that in the sphere of Māyā all duality, such as blue and yellow, pleasure and pain, is only practical and not real.[3] In reality all is one and one is all. All that shines in the state of Māyā is illusory.[4] Hence, ultimately there is no real process.[5] Nevertheless, the Śaiva absolutist does not fully subscribe to the theory of illusion. He repeatedly asserts and tries to show that although in reality the power of action in the Highest Lord has no succession, yet because of its being responsible for the manifestation of succession, it is successive also.[6]

1. ननु च क्रमिकत्वमेव क्रियायाः स्वरूपम्, क्रमश्च कालकलनाहीने चिन्मये भगवति नास्ति, इति कथम् अस्य सा भवेदित्याशङ्क्याह:··· । Ibid. pp.9-10.
2. यतः इयति पूर्वपक्षे इयदेव जीवितम् एकमनेकस्वभावं कथ स्यात् इति । IPV. II. i. 1.
3. Ibid. II. ii. 2.
4. Ibid. II. iii. 13.
5. तत्र तु न कोऽपि क्रमः तत्त्वतः । एवम् ईश्वरस्यापि 'ईशे भासे स्फुरामि घूर्णे प्रत्यवमृशामि' इत्येवंरूपं यदिच्छात्मकं विमर्शनम् 'अहम्' इत्येतावन्मात्रतत्त्वं न तत्र कश्चित् क्रमः,··· । Bhāskarī, II. p. 25.
6. Ibid. p. 6.

The world appearances are not mere figments of nescience. They are the different ways in which the absolute manifests or knows itself. They are not projections of an alien power like Māyā. Like the individual who has different experiences from his childhood to youth, the absolute light reflects various forms without undergoing any change. The Light is both of the nature of being and becoming; in other words, both are identical in it. While all other kinds of change involve a modification of the object in which the change appears to take place, no real modification takes place in the case of self-manifestation. In this case change refers only to an ideal or apparent separation or objectification of that which is always one and subjective.

The conception of 'Trinity' (Śiva, Śakti and Parama Śiva) occupies a significant place in Śaiva absolutism. Parama Śiva, which is Pūrṇa or perfect, represents the supreme unity of Śiva and Śakti, being and becoming. Accordingly, it is within the process of becoming and also transcends all becoming. It is the eternity which can be described as the supreme time (Mahā Kāla). Past, present and future are divisions in the realm of finite time. They are not manifest in the absolute or eternal. Time and space are but categories of the limited individual consciousness and do not apply to absolute. 'What appears as a sequence or gradation of antagonistic states to the human mind is not a sequence at all from the standpoint of the absolute. The truth is voidness and plenitude, everything and naught.[1]

In brief, the Śaiva absolutist asserts that the essential nature of consciousness does not really change, though it appears to be changing as it were.[2] Like the waves which are always one with the sea, the manifestations are always one with consciousness both before and after their separate manifestation. The change in the absolute is only a change of appearances.

1. Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, p. 210.
2. IPV. I. v. 14.

In the Vedānta the world appearances, the chief characteristic of which is falsity (mithyātva), are taken to be illusory manifestation of the absolute. The moment true knowledge of reality dawns, the world appearances vanish like objects in dream. As the unreal cannot be the product of the real, the world cannot be a real product of Brahman. The author of *Advaita Siddhi*, after discussing at great length the supposed reality of the world, comes to the conclusion that the world cannot be real. It must be ultimately false. If the world were real, it would imply a limitation on the part of the absolute. Moreover, in that case there would be no possibility of freedom. Therefore, the Vedāntin maintains that the perfection of the absolute cannot be reconciled with the reality of the world. We have to admit that what appears is false, the real is that which never appears. On the Vedānta theory of causation, called Vivartavāda, the cause does not transform itself in the effect. It is the unmodified ground of the appearance of the effect. On the view that the effect is merely an illusory manifestation of the cause, it is easier to explain the world appearances. The absolute is the ever unmodified ground of these appearances. Except being their supporting cause, it is not in any way related to the appearances. Hence it ever remains perfect. Instead of explaining the world process in terms of its dependence upon the absolute, the Śaiva integralists commit the mistake of advocating a kind of mutual dependence between the absolute and the world, and thus reduce the absolute to the level of the relative.

The world appearances being merely illusory do not at all affect Brahman. The Lord is not modified by the world process, like the magician who is not affected by his own magic. As the dreaming person is not affected by the events taking place in his dreams because they do not accompany the waking state and the state of deep sleep, similarly the real, which is the one unchanging witness of the three states, viz creation, maintenance and re-absorption of world, is not affected by these mutually exclusive states.

That the absolute appears in these three states is a mere illusion. This illusion is no more substantial than the snake for which the rope is mistaken in the twilight.[1] The alleged break in Brahman's nature due to the world process is a mere figment of nescience. By a break of this kind, a thing is not really broken up into parts, not any more than the moon is really multiplied by appearing double to a person of defective vision. By that element of plurality which is a fiction of nescience which is characterised by name and form, which is evolved and not evolved, which is not to be defined either as the existing or the non-existing, Brahman becomes the basis of the entire world with its change and so on, while it is always in its true form, as the pure, unchanged witness consciousness. And as the distinctions arise from speech only, they do not go against the fact of Brahman being without parts. Such distinctions exist in the one self of the dreaming person. And in ordinary life also, they exist in the case of God and the magician. Similarly, the multifarious creation may exist in Brahman also, one as it is, without affecting the character of unity. But all difference being produced by the limiting adjuncts of nescience, the Scriptures declare that there is really no difference in Brahman.

In the preceding pages, attempt has been made to discuss some of the important points concerning the problem of absolute and its manifestation. The central problem which persists throughout this discussion is whether the manifestation of the finite process from the infinite can logically be possible. And if the process is logically possible, then how and why does it take place ? Finally, how far is it proper to uphold the reality of the process and still maintain the perfection of self-identity of the absolute. At present, it is not our purpose to determine the validity or invalidity of a particular standpoint—nor would it be proper to do so. At the most, we may compare and contrast the two s andpoints and thereby try to find out

1. SB. vol. I. p. 312 (Thibaut).

the consistency or inconsistency in them But this can be possible only at the end of the discussion of the problem in its entirety. Before we proceed further, it would be better to state briefly what we have already discussed.

According to the Śaivite creation consists in the external manifestation of that which is already within consciousness. The appearances, accordingly, have two states of existence, the one which belongs to them when they are internal to consciousness and the other which belongs to them when they are manifest outside consious-ness. The second state of appearances, when they are manifest as external, involves novelty. In this state of existence, they possess a new characteristic which was not present previously. It consists in their being manifest objectively, as '*idam*.' The manifestation of this novelty is possible because of the power of free consciousness. It is the spontaneous free will of the Lord which gives rise to the manifestation of a variety of Ābhāsas. Infinite novelties arise from, and merge into, the absolute conscious-ness which is the eternally manifest and eternally quiescent (*nityodita* and *nitya śānta*). However, the novelty of appearances does not mean that there is any change in the nature of the absolute. In reality, the universe is ever perfect and there is nothing new directly cognised or remembered.[1] Here it cannot be held that in that case the manifestables should have been the object of both internal and external senses even before creation. For, the truth is that just as in the case of the reflection of jar etc., which are being made by the potter in a mirror, so also in the case of the objects which shine in dream and waking life, the power of making them so manifest belongs to the absolute whose glory is beyond the reach of finite thoughts and as such cannot be questioned.[2] Novelty or externality itself is an appearance or Ābhāsa which the

1. IPV. I. iii. 7.

2. ...न च वाच्यम् उभयेन्द्रियवेद्यत्वमपि सदसद् वा इति। यतोऽयमत्र परमार्थः यथा दर्पणान्तः कुम्भकारनिर्वर्त्यमानघटादिप्रतिबिम्बे दर्पणस्यैव तथाभासनमहिमा, तथा स्वप्नदर्शने संविदः... । Ibid. II, iv. 4.

Lord manifests, together with the other appearances, owing to his power of freedom. And just as the other appearances do not affect His identity, so also the appearance of novelty or externality does not affect Him in any way. Moreover, there can be no contradiction in manifestation itself which is nothing but a form of consciousness. Even such contradictory manifestations as pleasure and pain owe their being to the light of consciousness.[1]

The Vedāntin appears to be more concerned with maintaining the perfection of the absolute rather than deducing the world from it. Unlike the Śaivite, he does not face any serious difficulty in accounting for both the novelty of the appearances and the identity of the absolute. Brahman can produce any number of appearances without in any way being affected by them. While accommodating the practical importance and novelty of the world process with the absoluteness of Brahman, the Vedānta represents a vigorous attempt to defend the absolute purity of the substratum or the ground of appearances. Strange though it appears, this standpoint has led the Vedānta to the advantageous position wherefrom it can easily explain the emergence of effects from the causes. The *taṭastha lakśaṇa* emphasizes the free nature of Brahman. As it is not necessarily connected with the world, Brahman may freely appear in any form.[2]

5. The Absolute and the individual

Admittedly, the crux of absolutism lies in the relation of the finite mind to the absolute. When we consider the relationship between them, the problem arises that if the absolute consciousness is exclusive to the finite mind, in what sense can it be regarded as the absolute ? But, if the individual consciousness is also included in the absolute, then in what sense does it remain as absolute ? The contrast between the finite experience of separateness and the absolute experience of unity should be resolved in absolutism.[3]

1. Ibid. II. i. 5.
2. The two Definitions of Brahman in Vedānta.
3. Cleobury, op. cit. p. 26.

Ultimately, we cannot attribute a substantial existence to the individual; the absolute alone is the true individual. All individuals are expressions of the absolute at different stages. The absolute itself sleeps in the stone, breathes in the plants, feels in the animals and awakens to self-consciousness in men. The entire finitude is rooted in the absolute. But the question arises whether on the theory of the absolute the human beings could have any real freedom of their own. One of the criticisms of absolutism is that it tends to make the human being a mere objective or superfluous manifestation of the absolute and denies to him substantive existence. Many of the absolutists regard reality as the ultimate subject of every judgement, and the whole proposition, whether categorical or hypothetical or disjunctive, whether singular, particular or universal, is the predicate. According to them, the real subject of a judgement, as distinct from the grammatical, is the Absolute. It is difficult to understand how the finite mind can be the individual mind and also a part of the divine mind, at the same time. The central problem is to explain how the individual consciousness can also be absolute consciousness without ceasing to be individual. The Śaiva absolutist anticipates this difficulty and holds that in reality there is no individual consciousness. The main aim of the scriptures is to remove the ignorance regarding the true nature of the individual. In reality, the individual himself is the absolute. The objection that if the Lord Himself is the creator in all cases the potter ceases to be the creator of jar, and the line of demarcation, therefore, between merit and demerit will disappear would be valid if we believe in reason and the authority of the Scriptures.[1] But the Śaivite would reject the charge that on his view moral and

1. नन्वेवं कुम्भकृतो नास्ति कर्तृत्वम्,-इति समुत्सीदेत् धर्माधर्मव्यवस्था। यदि प्रत्येषि युक्त्यागमयो:, तदेवमेव। तथापि समस्तेतरनिर्माणमध्य एव इदमपि परमेश्वरेणैव निर्मितं यदविचलस्तस्य कुम्भकारपशोर्मिथ्याकर्तृत्वाभिमान: प्रतिभुव इव अधमर्णताभिमान:। यदि पुनरीश्वरस्येच्छैव इयमीदृशी 'मा अस्य अभिमानोऽयम् उद्गमत्' इति, तदा नासौ कर्ता कश्चित्।
Bhāskarī, vol. II, p. 168.

spiritual experience would become meaningless because there is only one supreme will in the universe. Nor would he accept the objection that his view would lead to absolute determinism, as there would be no scope for individual initiative. For, the individual is really free to act in his own way. Being the absolute, he is omnipotent and omniscient. As Śiva, he is perfectly free from all impurities. But when he is associated with Māyā and is, therefore, manifest as limited, he is called *Paśu*, the bound.[1] There is no essential difference between the absolute and individual. To the finite vision they appear as different but in reality they are always identical. In spite of the assumed limitation, the individual is the same as the absolute. This identity between them is established on the basis of self-experience, reason and the scriptures.[2] Individuality is produced when He is led away by His own powers.[3] It consists in forgetting one's own powers and believing oneself to be limited.[4]

Both the absolute and the individual preform the five functions of creation etc. The individual preforms these functions on a limited scale due to being limited by Māyā which covers the true nature of the individual. Māyā produces limitation in the form of limited activity, limited knowledge, etc.[5] The difference between the absolute and the individual is that whereas everything appears as pure unity to the absolute, it appears as essentially discursive or relational to the individual. While the individual has the finite vision, the absolute has the vision of the whole. To Īśvara, the prameyas (objects) are the object of pure consciousness, unmixed with the element of determination.

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1. स तु विशुद्धस्वभावः शिवात्मा, मायापदे तु संकुचितस्वभावः पशुः । IPV. II. ii. 3.
2. जीव शिवायो वास्तवो न कोऽपि भेदः । Ibid. IV. i.; PS. pp. 13-17, SD. II. 34.
3. PH. IX.
4. Ibid.; PS. pp. 56-59.
5. SN. III. 14.

To the limited subject they shine as related to determinate cognition.[1] The variety which is due to being and not-being of manifestations and which has been represented to be the basis of temporal succession in all external objects, which are unity in multiplicity can shine only to the limited subjects, e.g. Śūnya etc., which are of limited light only. To shine is not the essential nature of the limited subject, because it is insentient like other objects, such as blue etc. Its shining as subject consists in the slight stir in the light of consciousness. Therefore, when that is absent, as in the case of body, or of a subject in the state of deep sleep, or senselessness, or that of the vital air, then the continuity of its shining is broken There is temporal succession in the limited subject due to being and not-being of manifestation, as in 'I am no longer a child', 'Now I am young'. And because the empirical subject is identified with the limited 'I' consciousness, the temporal succession is evident in it. It is such a subject who is responsible for the appearance of temporal succession in the external object, e.g. 'I was a boy and the pot also had simultaneous existence with me as such'. But there is no temporal succession in the eternal subject who is essentially consciousness and is, therefore, ever shining. Nor is there such a succession even in the objects related to him. For they ever shine as one with Him. Similarly, spatial succession also shines only in the individul. It also shines in the objects, because of their being related to him, (e. g 'that which is in close proximity is near and that which is contrary to it is far'). To the absolute who is perfect the objects shine as his very self and are perfect in every way.[2]

According to the Vedāntin the absolute cannot be regarded as the totality of individuals. Nor can it be held that it excludes them. The main difficulty is that finite thought by its very nature cannot give us any knowledge of the relationship between the absolute and the individual.

1. IPV. IV. i. 8.
2. IPV. II. i. 7.

Any view of a real manifestation of the absolute as the individual would imply a phenomenalisation of the transcendent. It is not possible to apply the finite categories to the Infinite. The inexplicability of the individual consists in his being neither different nor non-different from the absolute. It cannot be different, because nothing can be really different from the absolute. If it were different, then the saying of the scripture 'through the knowledge of the One everything becomes known' would become meaningless.[1] Freedom also would become impossible if the individual were different from the absolute.[2] Nor can the individual be non-different from Brāhman as in that case no words can be used for it. The individual cannot be regarded as a part or aspect of the absolute which is without parts or aspects. The analogy of the self and its states also does not lead us anywhere. For, there can be no relation of one consciousness and another in the case of absolute consciousness. Therefore, being neither a part of, nor different from, nor a self-modification or self-limitation of the absolute, the individual has to be regarded as an illusory appearance. The question of the 'how' and 'why' of the finite remains an inexplicable mystery which our thought is unable to solve.[3]

The difference between the two arises due to ignorance. It consists in the limiting adjuncts presented by nescience consisting of the organs of action etc. The simile of one cosmic space appearing as many due to the limitations superimposed by physical objects brings out the nature of relationship between the absolute and the individual. Owing to the limited adjuncts of body etc., the one universal self is practically treated as if it were many, just as the one cosmic space is treated differently as the space of jar, the space of room etc. And as space is not really divided by its apparent division in the case of jar, house etc., so also the absolute consciousness is not really divided by the adjuncts of body etc.

1. SB. I. iv. 20.
2. Śaṁkara' s Comm. on Tait. Up. II. 8. 15.
3. Raju, P. T., opp. cit. p. 86.

6. The Indeterminate and the determinate

While the Vedāntin regards individuality to be a creation of *avidyā*, the Śaivite holds it to be a self-determination of the absolute. All absolutists, however, generally subscribe to the view that the absolute is indeterminate. Strictly adhering to the demand of logic, some absolutists take special care not to ascribe any determination to the absolute. According to them, the so-called logic of self-determination of the absolute really amounts to a determination of the inderminate by the finite logic. But against this, the Śaiva absolutist emphasizes that if the absolute did not have the freedom of self-manifestation or self-determination, it would no longer be absolute. The denial of freedom of self-limitation to the absolute would amount to an imputation of the finite thought upon the infinite. The manifestation of the determinates could be explained only on the view that it is the Indeterminate itself which shines as the determinate. But determination being limitation or negation, the question arises as to whether a real determination of the indeterminate is logically possible. And if it is possible, can the Indeterminate any more remain unaffected by limitation ?

In the integral vision of the Śaivite, the Indeterminate does not appear as a rigid indeterminable. The determinate emanates from, and shines within, the Indeterminate. The indeterminacy of the absolute does not mean that it is incapable of determining itself. It, rather, indicates a complete freedom from limitation in spite of its being self-determined. Of course, the absolute cannot be determined by the categories of thought, of affirmation, negation, both affirmation and negation, neither affirmation nor negation. But this freedom from all limitation, from any binding by its own creations, cannot be itself turned into a negation or limitation, an absolute incapacity or denial of all freedom of self-determination.[1] All conscious self-limitation is a power for some special purpose; it is

1. LD., vol. II. pp. 302, 269-292.

not a weakness. This power of self-limitation, instead of being incompatible with the nature of absolute consciousness, is precisely one of the powers we should expect in the absolute.[1]

The Indeterminate always includes the determinate in it. At the time of the indeterminate experience also there is determinate consciousness. For, there would be no possibility of 'running' etc. if there be no determinate consciousness (though in a subtle form). The determinate is, therefore, never separate from the Indeterminate.[2] Determinacy is the power of the Highest Lord and is called Vimarśa. While Prakāśa denotes the indeterminate nature of Reality, Vimarśa stands for that aspect of it which leads to free determinations. The indeterminate consciousness is always in association with inner speech, which is an essential characteristic of the Self. It is similar to 'indication' by finger etc. Otherwise, how can a child, on seeing a particular transaction for the first time, have any knowledge ? The whole process is something like this : the child hears the word spoken by another person through a regular succession of indeterminate cognitions, he sees the object in regard to which the word has been used before, then he sees the place without the thing. Now on hearing the words 'bring the jar,' how can the consciousness that that particular thing is the meaning of a particular word, viz., this is the meaning of the word 'jar,' this is the meaning of the word 'bring,' arise in the heart of the child ? For, the consciousness that this particular object is the meaning of this particular word, depends essentially upon unification which is a determinate cognitive activity.[3] All words are capable of expressing all meanings. But at the time of acquisition of convention a particular word is unified with a particular meaning. This shows that there is an element of determinacy in the

1. Ibid.

2. तस्मात् सर्व एव विमर्शः प्रकाशात् अविच्छिन्न एव इति । IPV. I. V. 20.

3. IPV. I. V. 19.

indeterminate experience. However, it does not imply that the absolute itself is determinate. There being nothing similar to, and independent of, the light of consciousness and, therefore, differentiation being impossible, the absolute subject cannot be regarded as determinate. Even though He is at every moment ceaselessly creating the three worlds by hundreds of determinate thoughts, the eternal being ever remains indeterminate.[1]

The Vedāntin holds that in order to be consistent absolutism has necessarily to exclude empirical determinations of the Real. Determination being limitation, the absolute cannot be regarded as determinate. In itself, the indeterminate does not imply any determination. For, if it were so, the determinate being ever present in the indeterminate, there would be no possibility of pure indeterminacy. If the indeterminate always includes determinacy there would be no possibility of such states as dreamless sleep, swoon, samādhi etc. In fact, without the indeterminate, even the determinate would not be possible. The determinate always presupposes the indeterminate as its support. But the indeterminate is independent of the determinate, which is the adjunct of ignorance and is superimposed upon the former. It is nescience which gives rise to determinate cognition in the case of the child who gains knowledge at the first sight of a particular transaction. This illustration does not really support the Śaiva theory. On the other hand, it only shows the validity of the Vedānta view that the determinate arises as a superimposition upon the indeterminate.

The absolute in its essential nature cannot be regarded both as indeterminate and determinate. For two essential characteristics cannot belong to one and the same thing. Only one of them can be essential and the other accidental.

1. मुहुर्मुहुरविश्रान्तस्त्रैलोक्यं कल्पनाशतैः ।
कल्पयन्नपि कोऽप्येको निर्विकल्पो जयत्यजः ॥
Bhaskari, 1. p. 240, Stava Cintāmani. 121.

Indeterminacy alone, being more fundamental than determinacy, is the essential nature of the absolute. The indeterminate Brahman does not become limited on the theory of accidental determination. For, by being connected with limitation in this way a thing of one kind cannot assume another nature, just as the transparent pure crystal does not become opaque by being connected with limitations such as red colour and the like, on the contrary, it is a misconception that opaqueness permeates it. Similarly, Brahman must be regarded as absolutely free from all determination and differences, and not that it really assumes self-determination.[1]

7. Unity and Multiplicity

The Śaiva absolutists describe reality as the One (*eka*) which manifests itself as many (*bahu*). The *eka* as the *bahu* is the fundamental reality. The entire universal existence moves between these two poles, a diversification of the one and a unification of the many (abhede bhedanam, bhede ca abhedanam). It must be so because the one and many are the fundamental aspects of the absolute reality.[2] Like a mirror, the self-luminous *saṁvid* assumes various conflicting forms and at the same time remains identical. The mirror assumes several forms, such as those of mountain, elephant etc., which are reflected in it, without undergoing any change in its essential nature.[3] Our own experience also supports this view. The subject manifests or knows itself through various states of consciousness without giving up its essential nature. Just as the self, though present to each part of the body, is individual and one, in that it simultaneously holds whole parts of that body together, sustains and moves it, so also the being of the universe is one in the Infinite and not less present in any one of the

1. Deussen, P., *Systems of Vedānta*, pp. 102-3.
2. LD. pp. 302-8
3. IPV. II. i. 1 ; SD. pp. 40-2, 120-4 ; PS. pp. 15.-30, 58. PH. p. 26-9.

individual beings, so that in every truth, the whole and every part is one in substance.[1] The absolute is thus an integral unity of all duality. Although the various colours are present in the sun's rays, they do not appear different from each other. Similarly, everything is potentially and actually present in the absolute, the One which is the All.

Unity and multiplicity both are revealed in experience. For example, in the perception of a city from the top of a hill we apprehend unity and multiplicity at the same time. There is a clear awareness of unity and multiplicity in such cases. In the actual life there is no opposition between them. Entire practical life presupposes the experience of one in many or many in one. They always appear in a state of *sāmarasya*. Only in the case of determinate cognition they shine separate. In reality they are always united.

As regards the objection that how can the one simultaneously be many, the Śaivite raises a counter-objection : how can that which is the cause at one time or place cease to be so at another ? If it is said that this is due to the difference of relationship with soil etc., it might be asked; who has given this boon that contrariety is no contrariety if there be difference of soil etc. ? Obviously, it is experience which gives the final verdict in every case. The one and the many are facts of experience.[2] The shining of both becomes possible because of their resting on saṁvid who is absolutely free. Even the animals and birds know this through their own experience that resting within the absolute saṁvid even the blazing water and fire do not contradict each other.[3]

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1. LD., op. cit.
2. यत्तु उक्तम्—एकमेव कथम् अनेकं भवति इति, तत्र उच्यते-इह कारणमेव कथम् अकारणं भवति, अथ उच्यते-विषयभेदात् तथा इति, तद्विषयभेदे एतत् न विरुध्यते इति केन अयं वितीर्णोऽवसरः ? ...। IPV. II. II. 2.
3. सर्वस्यहि तिरश्चोऽपि एतत् स्वसंवेदनसिद्धं-यत् संविदन्तर्विश्रान्तमेकतामापाद्यमानं जलज्वलनमपि अविरुद्धम् ...। Ibid II. III. 14.

In reality all is one. But because the one appears as many, therefore, the many is also real. And the cause of this appearance is the power of freedom. The introvert Reality is unity, the same being associated with the manifestations of time, space etc. appears as multiplicity when it becomes object of sense perception. Reality is the pure unitary consciousness which shines as, and through, multiplicity. It is like the seed which functions both as cause and not-cause.[1] Those who try to explain everything in terms of indeterminate cognition find it difficult to explain the identity of a thing which appears in more than one place. But there is no difficulty in explaining unity and multiplicity through the concept of *vimarśa*. It is due to the Vimarśa Śakti, the power of freedom of the Lord, that unity and multiplicity both become manifest.[2] Although unity and multiplicity, one and many, appear to be different, in reality, it is ignorance to regard them so.[3] For there are no contradictions or differences in consciousness.[4] All entities or categories from earth onward shine in inseparable unity with Reality.[5] As all categories rest upon consciousness, hence duality is only practical, not ultimate.[6] Like images in a mirror, the universe is in essence void of distinction and is not distinct from the light in which it is revealed. Nevertheless, it appears as a manifold experience, an internally differentiated complex of subject, as though it appeared from the power of cosmic vision (bodha), which seems to be some thing higher as the mirror is higher than its reflections. Thus, the light reveals itself in all forms. The differentiation in consciousness really constitutes an illusion, viz. the non-intuition

1. Ibid. II. ii. 2.
2. Ibid. II. iii. 9-11
3. Ibid. II. v. 17.
4. शिवस्य तु प्रकाशैकचित्स्वातन्त्र्यनिर्भरस्य न कोऽपि भेदः परिपूर्णत्वात् । TS. p. 98
5. यो धरातत्त्वाभेदेन प्रकाशः स शिव। TS. p. 100.
6. IPV. II. ii. 2.

of absoluteness of the self. From this illusion arises the conception of the imperfection and duality in Him, hence that of cosmic differentiation.[1]

Although the Vedāntin regards unity to be more fundamental than multiplicity, ultimately both are relative to him. The absolute is neither one nor many; it is the non-dual pure consciousness. The Scriptures declare that for him who sees that everything has its reality in Brahman, the entire phenomenal world with its actions, agents etc., is non-existent. To him unity alone is true and multiplicity is a product of wrong knowledge. We cannot regard the absolute as the unitary principle undergoing modification or manifestation in the world of plurality. Being absolutely changeless, the real can have no connection with change or plurality.[2] To the question, if nothing exists other than the non-dual Brahman how there can be any possibility of its appearance as the world of manifold, the Vedāntin holds that Brahman appears as manifold due to the adjuncts of nescience. As the reflected image of the Sun dilates when the surface of the water expands, it contracts when the water shrinks, it trembles when the water is agitated, it divides itself when the water is divided, and so on, while the real Sun remains all the time unaffected, similarly, Brahman, although in reality uniform and never changing, participates as it were in the growth, development and decay of the adjuncts.

Unity is more fundamental than multiplicity. It is the latter which presupposes the former, and not vice versa. The category of difference cannot stand logical scrutiny. For, it cannot be recognized by perception, whether determinate or indeterminate. It can neither be cognized as a separate entity independent of the terms which it relates.[3] Nor can difference be interpreted as the very nature of the thing that differs. If the thing itself be supposed to

1. PS. p. 13.
2. SB. vol. I. pp. 154, 321-7; vol II. 157. (Thibaut)
3. Rai Choudhury, A.K., *Self and Falsity in Advaita Vedānta*, pp. 48-9

be of the nature of difference, it would lose its own nature[1] To regard difference as something positive in itself would lead to insuperable difficulties. Positive difference may be conceived either as an attribute qualifying the differents or as identical with one of them. Neither of the two alternatives is satisfactory. Those who regard difference to be negative also fail to explain its real nature. According to the Vedāntin, we cannot ultimately choose between the two views. The notion of difference has to be rejected as it cannot be satisfactorily explained either as positive or negative. Difference is not real but only an appearance of Reality.[2]

8. Absolute and Negation

The Śaiva absolutists assert that though the absolute is free from contradictions, it is also free from limitations. As nothing can really be excluded from it, the absolute even contains an element of self-negation. It becoms active through its own opposition or negation. Negativity is thus not only consistent with, but also indispensable to, absoluteness. Without negativity, the absolute would reduce itself to an abstract unity; with negativity it is raised to concrete totality. God or the whole has the element of negation; for the richer the whole, the greater is its negativity.[3] It is the presence of this negativity in Reality which gives rise to the manifestation of the world. Manifestation of finitude, individuality and multiplicity can be accounted for only on the notion of negativity. Without negation, the absolute cannot manifest itself as limited.

The problem of negation arises differently in the Vedānta and Śaiva absolutisms. Whereas in the Vedānta negation is of the nature of rejection or cancellation, for the Śaiva absolutism negation is grounded in reality and

1. Ibid. pp. 50-52.
2. Hiriyana, *Indian Philosophical Studies*, Pt. I., p. 141.
3. Radhakrishnan, S., *Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, pp. 81-2.

performs a positive function. Negation is the power of self-limitation of Parama Śiva. The Śaivite holds that the indeterminate absolute manifests itself as determinate or limited through its power which is of the form of self-negation.[1] 'Animated by the desire to manifest the universe, which is founded on identity with Himself, the magnificent Parama Śiva at first flashes in the void. the absolutely void.'[2] At the transcendental level of manifestation, the divine power is responsible for bringing about an apparent negation of supreme egoity, a concealment of the ideal universe. Negation thus serves as the principle of manifestation. It represents the passage from the noumena to phenomena, from the absolute to the relative. In order that the ideal universe may be negated and thereby the finite manifestation may take place, He brings out into operation that aspect of His power which manifests itself as the principle of negation, and is called Śakti Tattva. It is due to the operation of the Śakti Tattva, which primarily works as the principle of negation, that the manifestation of Śiva Tattva becomes possible. Negation constitutes His self-concealment or disappearance (Tirodhāna). As a result of it, there begins the concealment of Saccidānanda into its own opposite. 'The divine Śakti which is of the nature of self-forgetting and self-differentiating, conceals the supreme egoity of the Lord and thereby manifests the finite universe.'[3] Because of this act of self-concealment, existence loses its integral nature and consciousness no more remains self-conscious or free, and the integral unity of being and becoming, Śiva and Śakti, consciousness and freedom, gives way to dualism or opposition. *Bodha* becomes devoid of *svātantrya* and *svātantrya* also becomes manifest without *bodha*. Negation

1. PS. Kārikā 4.
2. PH. IV.
3. विश्वस्य प्रमातृप्रमेयरूपस्य पराहन्ताचमत्कारसारस्यापि स्वस्वरूपापोहनात्माख्यातिमयी निषेधव्यापाररूपा या पारमेश्वरी 'शक्तिः,' सैव आच्छादकत्वेन वन्धकतया शक्त्यण्डम् ...। PS. pp. 10, 86-87

is, thus, the principle responsible for self-limitation of the absolute and for the subsequent manifestation of the universe.

There is no absolute negation in Śaivism. Negation at the highest level is nothing but the manifestation of the Supreme Will. The absolute is so rich and full that even negation itself is included in it. Although negation is transformed into integral harmony in the absolute, this transformation does not imply a cancellation or rejection of its nature. On the contrary, it is an expression of the fullness of Reality. 'According to this system the existence of one thing means the existence of another. This is what we know from the experience of ordinary everyday life. The relation of existence with non-existence is the same as that of two things which stand in the relation of container and the contained. Therefore, whatever is seen on the ground as different from the jar, it may be a piece of stone or mass of light etc. as perceived by an eye, is in ordinary life spoken as the "non-being of the jar on the ground", or "there is no jar on the ground".[1] Negation is not something external to the absolute, it is the power of freedom of consciousness. 'He possesses the power, the chief function of which is to obscure the state of being the Highest Lord, which is characterised by a perfect rest in His essential nature.'[2] It is owing to the power of freedom that there is manifest in Him, who is essentially light, that which is the negation of light, right at the time when His essential nature, the light of consciousness, is shining in full.[3]

The Absolute must have the power of self-limitation or self-negation. Otherwise we cannot account for its determinate and limited manifestation. In fact, the very distinction between the real and the abstract becomes significant only on the notion of determination or limitation which is absent

1. IPV. I. vii. 10.
2. Ibid. IV. i. 10.
3. Ibid. IV. i. 10.

in the latter and present in the former. The concreteness of reality lies precisely in the readiness with which it can fall into contradiction with itself.[1] The absolute cannot be regarded either as negative or as abstract; it must be the the fullest positive reality. Though as a self-revealing principle the absolute always involves negation, it cannot be regarded as a self-fulfilling process as it is eternally perfect. But negation cannot be exclusive to the absolute; for, if there is an entity outside of it, and which it cannot observe, how can it significantly be called the absolute? To regard negation as external would amount to a negation of the absolute itself. Therefore, the Śaivite asserts that in fact negation is the manifestation of the absoluteness of reality and does not involve any contradiction in it. Contradictions do not operate in reality which is absolute unity. All determination or differentiation is based upon negation. We speak of certainty, e.g. of a jar, that 'this is jar and nothing else', only on the basis of differentiation, the chief characteristic of which is negation. Although Piśāca is not-light, or is different from light, yet, just as there is a possibility of his being within the ground unseen, so there is a possibility of his being within the mass of light also.[2] The fact is that nothing can be absolutely negated. Even negation also exists because it shines.[3]

According to the Vedāntin, however, the attempts to combine the concepts of existence and non-existence are bound to fail. Being and not-being both cannot equally retain their nature within the absolute. If not-being is so much identical with being that it is indistinguishable from the latter, we have no ground to draw any distinction between the two. We would not even be able to say that not-being is included in the absolute being. Therefore, we have to admit that negation, even when it is manifest or is being experienced, is not real. Otherwise, if it is really

1. Maitra, S. K., Problem of Negation *Malaviya, Commemoration Volume.*
2. IPV. I. vii. 11.
3. Ibid. II. iv. 20.

manifest, it would not be cancelled. As contrasted with the real which is never an object of negation, the unreal is that which is liable to be negated at all times. Negation is not ultimately real. It not only negates the illusory, but also negates itself. By its very nature negation is that which is an object of absolute negation (atyanta niṣedha, or mithyātva of mithyātva). Negation cannot have an independent status of its own. All significant negation must ultimately rest upon the absolute. It presupposes as its ground that which is real. It is not possible by any amount of logical jugglery to allot any place for it in the absolute. Negation means rejection or cancellation, and not assimilation or supplementation. It is the aim of all spiritual disciplines to get rid of limitation or negation. There can be no conscious or self-willed limitation. For there is no passage from the real to the unreal.

Only the determinate or the finite contains the element of negation. The indeterminate absolute is devoid of all negations and determinations. Ultimately, the nature of negation is inexplicable. The 'how' and 'why' of its origin is a mystery which transcends the finite reason. Negation appears to be rooted in difference which itself is inexplicable. All that we find is that after the negative is cancelled, the original ground is revealed in its place. It cannot be held that the negative and the affirmative are reciprocally dependent; for it is the former which depends upon the latter. Every negation presupposes an affirmation. Though negation depends upon Brahman, it could not have originated from Him. The eternal perfection of the absolute is incompatible with real negation. Negation is a product of nescience which vanishes at the dawn of right knowledge. Accordingly, although negation is beginningless, it is cancellable in the end. Without the absolute, negation is insignificant and unreal. The absolute negation of the phenomenal world is certified by the Scripture, according to which the world of difference is not in Brahman.[1] The illusory silver is negated for all time in the nacre. The

1. Śaṁkara's Comm. on Bṛh. Up. IV. iv. 19.

experience that the shell silver does not, did not, and will not exist, proves its eternal negation. The reality of Brahman means the negation of unreality. And the negation is nothing but the locus (viz. Brahman) itself. The substratum is the essence of the superimposed and also of the negation of the superimposed.

In brief, while negation serves as the principle of phenomenalisation in Śaivism, it plays the double role of the denial of the phenomena and affirmation of the noumena in the Vedānta.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ŚAKTI

Unlike other absolutists, the Śaiva absolutists regard negation or limitation as a power of the absolute. Negation represents the power of self-limitation of the absolute. Though the Hegelian absolutists also regard world evolution as a product of self-limitation of the absolute, there is no concept of free will in the Hegelian absolute.[1] The Śaiva absolute manifests itself as limited owing to its free will. The power of freedom of consciousness plays a vital role in the manifestation of the universe. It is this power or Śakti in the absolute which gives rise to evolution and involution of the world.

Śakti is witnessed everywhere in the universe. There is no object or event which does not disclose the presence of Śakti. These different Śaktis in the universe are ultimately non-different from each other. They are the various manifestations of the one universal Śakti. The universal Śakti is present in all its manifestations like fire in all combustible materials. That the various powers are manifestations of one absolute Power becomes evident on the theory of evolution and also on considering the relationship between these powers. It is one and the same Śakti which is manifest as poverty in the poor, as sin in the sinner, as glory in the glorious, as intelligence among the intelligent, as modesty in the well-bred, as feminine charm in the ladies, and so on. There is but one potency or power in all the contraries. For, where the principle by which two

1. The Hegelian absolute seems to be confronted with its opposite. Self-limitation is not an act of free will, but a logical necessity on the part of the absolute. The Spirit in Hegelian absolutism, though infinite, must pretend to itself to be finite, only in order to overcome this pretence, to distinguish itself from everything finite and to become aware of its infinity. Findley, J. N., *Hegel : a Re-examination*. p. 38 (Allen & Unwin).

things are comprehended is the same, the principle of their being is also the same. And as the contraries are perceived by one and the same sense, therefore, they belong to one and the same substrate.

Even those thinkers who regard that the cause does not have an inherent potency to produce the effect have to admit that the causes possess various powers. Nobody can regard Śakti or powers to be unreal like the skyflower. Although the powers are not known independently of their substrates, it does not mean that they are unreal. There are innumerable powers in every object. Although these powers themselves cannot become object of our knowledge, they are, however, inferred from their effects. It is difficult to explain why fire is hot and water is cool. Though power cannot be pointed out as 'this' or 'that,' as it is not an object of thought (*acintya*), it can be recognised from the effects it produces. A power is the inherent and inseparable nature of an object. We have to admit the power of burning in fire, even though it is concealed or hidden.

According to the Śaivite, it is wrong to assume either that Śakti is the supreme reality in itself or that it is merely an illusion. In order to arrive at the true conception of Śakti we have to avoid these two extreme views. These extremes can be reconciled on the view that Śakti is the manifestation of absolute consciousness. It is consciousness-power, *cit Śakti*, which gives rise to the manifestation of innumerable Śaktis in the world. It is because of their resting on Śiva, which is the only place of rest, that the innumerable powers produce various effects, just as gems do the variegated light.[1] The divine Śakti, residing in all objects in a subtle state, performs the various functions. The universal Śakti, which gives rise to the various powers in the world, is really the power of consciousness. Śakti

1. अनन्तशक्तिरत्नानां यदेकाश्रयसंश्रयात् ।
बिचित्रचन्द्रिकोल्लाससंसिद्धिस्तं स्तुमः शिवम् ॥ IPV. vii, Intr. (Bhaskarī, vol. I. p. 345).

cannot itself be material, nor can its substratum be material. Śakti ultimately belongs to the absolute alone. Parama Śiva assumes the form of Śiva and Śakti, Prakāśa and Vimarśa, during the process of manifestation. Like these forms of the absolute, the process of manifestation is also eternal. It assumes the form of the universe during evolution and the form of destruction during involution.[1] Śakti has also been described as *Svātantrya*, *Kartṛtva*, *Sphurattā*, *Sāra*, *Hṛdaya*, *Spanda* etc. Śakti gives rise to the manifestation of the world which includes the thirty-four categories from Sadāśiva to Earth. While the Śiva and Śakti tattvas are always manifest, the tattvas from Sadāśiva to Earth are subject to evolution and involution. Śakti is the universal principle which gives rise to the manifestation of the process of evolution and involution. It is also responsible for the manifestation of the absolute as finite.

Many systems failed in their attempt to explain the relationship between the absolute and the phenomena because they created an artificial gulf between consciousness and freedom. They could not realise that devoid of freedom, consciousness would become inert. Those who hold the view that consciousness and power are different are ultimately led to the conclusion that they both are inert and, consequently, 'nothing'; the development of Indian thought from the Sāṁkhya dualism ultimately leads some thinkers to this conclusion. But we have to accept that Reality is Śiva-Śakti, Prakāśa-Vimarśa, or consciousness-freedom. Only by recognizing this dual nature of Reality, we can hope to avoid the riddles or paradoxes of thought. That is why the revealed texts have proclaimed the Supreme Lord to be infinite as regards His powers. He alone is the cause or source of the glory of the universe.[2]

Unless we admit consciousness to be endowed with power or freedom, no human transactions would be

1. विमर्शोनाम विश्वकारेण विश्वप्रकाशेन विश्वसंहरणेन च अकृतिमहमिति स्फुरणम् । Parāpraveśikā. p. 2,
2. SN. I. 11. PS. Kārikās 10-11.

possible. Consciousness and freedom cannot be separated from each other. Śiva as the substratum or pure Prakāśa is never devoid of Śakti or Vimarśa. Similarly, Śakti also can never exist in separation from Śiva. The introvert Śakti itself is Śiva, the extrovert Śiva itself is Śakti ; introversion and extroversion both are the eternal manifestations of Reality. Although the Śiva tattva includes Śakti and the Śakti tattva, likewise, includes Śiva, the difference between them in the realm of manifestation consists in the predominance of the one over the other. In the transcendent absolute both represent a state of equilibrium. The state of equilibrium is called '*Sāmarasya*,' which itself is the absolute and is called Parama Śiva by the Śaivites and Parā Śakti by the Śāktas.

Śakti is the very nature (*svarūpa*) of Śiva According to the Śaivite, those systems which regard that Śakti exists in itself, as independent of Śiva, and also those which hold Śiva to be absolutely pure, devoid of any power, are ultimately led to nihilism. As consciousness cannot be devoid of freedom, similarly power also cannot be independent of its substratum, which is ultimately and invariably the absolute consciousness. That power cannot be regarded as material is the main contention of the Śaivite. The Sāṁkhya and the Vedāntin both were wrong in holding Śakti to be inert. For, in reality, the insentient is nowhere found to be powerful It always presupposes consciousness as its substratum. But if sentient substratum be accepted, then it is none other than Śiva, the absolute consciousness.[1] Śiva is the only place of rest of all innumerable powers. The powers produce their effects because they rest on Him. However, Śiva is not merely the support; He is also the possessor of these powers. Unlike the Vedānta Absolute, Śiva has the power of freedom as His essential nature. In His very nature, He possesses the powers of will, knowledge and action, and is

1. SD. IV. i. p. 145.

not an inanimate or inert being devoid of powers.[1] Indeed even the Sāṁkhya and the Vedāntin are ultimately forced to admit this, though they are not prepared to admit it openly. The Sāṁkhya, while postulating the independence of Prakṛti, also make it at the same time dependent upon Puruṣa. The very functioning of Prakṛti, the urge or drive for evolution and involution, is possible owing to its contact with Puruṣa. The Vedāntin also regards Māyā as a Śakti of Brahman. However, because the Sāṁhya and Vedānta regard power as essentially material, both of them fail to explain the relationship between Śakti and consciousness. If Śakti depends upon consciousness for its functioning and existence, and if consciousness is devoid of freedom or causality, where is the principle which gives rise to movement and becoming ? And as there cannot be a satisfactory answer to this question if consciousness and freedom are regarded as separate, ultimately we would be forced to accept the doctrine of avidyā. But acceptance of the notion of avidyā does not amount to an explanation.

Although the Śaivite agrees with the Śāṁkhya in regarding the world as real, he emphatically rejects the dualism of Sāṁkhya; for Prakṛti is not independent, nor separate from, Puruṣa . He also agrees with the Vedāntin in accepting the world as non-different from Brahman. But he rejects the Vedāntic view that the world is illusory. For him the world is a real manifestation of the absolute. The universe is essentially identical with the absolute[2]. The universe comprising of thirty-six tattavas shines in the supreme element (para tattva), which is radiant, perfect, mightily blissful from its being merged in the Self, fully stored with will and consciousness, replete with endless powers, void of all determination, pure, still and without origina-

1. इच्छा-ज्ञान-क्रियाशक्तिस्वभावमेव, न पुनः शान्तब्रह्मवादिनामिव शक्ति-विरहितं जड़कल्पम्, अन्यच्च 'अनन्तशक्तिपरिपूर्णम्' इति । PS. p. 32,
2. PH. III.

tion and dissolution.[1] Śiva, which is pure being, Śakti which is pure becoming, and the world, which is the offspring of the two, are all eternal. Ultimately, they are not different from each other. The world is a manifestation of Śakti, which is the manifestation of Śiva. Unlike the Vedāntin, the Śaivite prefers the concept of Śakti or Śvātantrya and regards Māyā as a lower manifestation of the divine Śakti. According to him there are higher levels of reality over and above the level of Māyā. The view that our experience is confined to the realm of Māyā amounts to limiting experience to a lower state of reality. We would have no ground, in that case, even to refute the materialist's view that our experience is confined to matter. The fact, however, is that different individuals stop at different levels, depending upon the stage of their realization of reality. The Yogins who have transcended the state of Māyā have declared that there are still higher levels of truth. If the Vedāntin attempts to explain the higher states of manifestation on the notion of pure (śuddha) Māyā, then he gives up his concept of Māyā and accepts the Śaiva notion of *cit Śakti*. According to Śaivism Māyā actually means the principle which differentiates the universe into a complex of subject and object of thought. It is styled as Goddess, as belonging to the God, and is, unlike the Māyā in the Vedānta, not something different from Him. It hides Śiva's real nature when He, of His own free will, enters into the condition of finite individuality by imposing thereupon the three defilements.[2]

Siva and Sakti

As regards the question of the relationship between Śiva and Śakti, the Śaivite holds that *Sāmarasya*, the equilibrium

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1. भारुपं परिपूर्णं
स्वात्मनि विश्रान्तितो महानन्दम् ।
इच्छासंवित्करणैर्
निर्भरितम् अनन्तशक्तिपरिपूर्णम् ॥ PS. Kārikās 10-11.

2. Ibid. pp. 44-45.

of Śiva and Śakti, is the very nature (*Svarūpa*) of the Absolute.[1] Parama Śiva is not a conglomeration of the two; it is an essential unity, of which these two are eternal manifestations. It is from this unity that the two appear as distinct. Though in reality they are never separate, they are distinguishable in the realm of manifestation. They represent the two-fold manifestation of the absolute. It is only from the standpoint of the phenomena that we talk of a relationship between them. Otherwise, thought cannot penetrate the veil of phenomena and arrive at the noumena. It is only when an apparent schism takes place in the integral reality that we talk of the relationship. In itself, the absolute might be described as either Parā Śakti or Parama Śiva. The absolute is not a state of predominance of either Śiva or Śakti ; it is a state of perfect integrality. Depending upon individual taste and temper, those who worship Reality in the form of male call it Parama Śiva and those who worship it as female call it Parā Śakti.[2]

When considered as distinct, Śiva represents the pure light of consciousness (*bodha*), the pure being without any becoming, and Śakti stands for the power or freedom (Svātantrya) of consciousness, the infinite form without light, or the principle of becoming. Only when the integral reality appears as self-limited, does there appear this distinction between consciousness and freedom. In reality, neither light can be without form nor form can be without light. It is only in the practical sphere that the distinction becomes possible. Form always presupposes light as its background; likewise, light also always appears with a form. If light did not reveal itself it would no longer be light. However, in spite of this dual mode of distinction, as light and form, it is the light itself which appears as the multitude of forms. Though distinguishable, like the sun and its rays, the light and its forms are always inseparable. From the point of view of change or multiplicity, the absolute is described

1. Ibid. p. 34.
2. Kaviraj, G., *Bhāratiya Saṅskṛti aur Sādhanā*, p. 17.

as Śakti; from the standpoint of being or unity, it is called Śiva. In itself it is both Śiva and Śakti, Male and Female (*Ardhanārīśvara*).[1] Just as fire and its burning power are spoken of as different from the practical point of view, while in reality they are always identical, similarly, the integral non-dual Reality is spoken of as Śiva and Śakti from the empirical point of view.[2] As there can be no Vimarśa without Prakāśa, there can be no Prakāśa without Vimarśa. Just as reflection cannot be possible without a background, so Vimarśa also cannot exist apart from Prakāśa; and, similarly, Prakāśa too ceases to be Prakāśa without Vimarśa. Prakāśa and Vimarśa, Śiva and Śakti, are essentially inseparable. Śiva is pure light without awareness. Just as the honey is sweet in itself without being aware of its sweetness, or as wine is intoxicant without being so aware, like wise, Śiva is also not conscious of himself without Śakti. Devoid of Śakti, Śiva would be insentient (jaḍa) and, consequently, as good as 'dead' (Śava). Śiva knows Himself only through His Śakti. But Śakti also depends upon Śiva for its functioning. Both are essentially dependent upon each other.[3] Though the God and Goddess appear as two, fundamentally they are one. For the sake of the universe and its creatures, the absolute has apparently unfolded into this duality, and out of them derive all the life polarities, antagonism, and distinction of power and elements that characterise the phenomenal world.[4] The unqualified pure substance, which is the support of the entire universe, has been called *cit* in masculine gender, and *citi*, in the

1. 'The two are the first revelation of the Absolute. Male being the passive aspect, the eternity, the female the active, the dynamism of time. Though opposite, they are in essence one. She is the universal power (Śakti), fairest of the three worlds, Umā, Durgā, Cāmundī, Gaurī, Hemāvati Vindhyavāsinī. She has her living counterpart in every woman, as the God has in every man.' Zimmer, H. *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization* pp. 137-8.
2. SD. III. 7.
3. Ibid. III. ii.
4. Zimmer, opp. cit.

Feminine. These are merely two names of one and the same entity which in its female aspect is worshipped as Īśvarī, Durgā or Bhagavatī, and as Īśvara, Śiva or Bhagavān, in its male aspect.[1]

As the innumerable rays are nothing but a manifestation of the sun, so Śakti also is nothing but a self-manifestation of Śiva Himself. Like moon and moonlight or sun and sunlight, Śiva and Śakti are eternally united. They are united with each other in the relation of tādātmya or *sāmarasya*, which means that they are inseparable and yet distinguishable in thought. The relationship between them, viz. tādātmya, is of the nature of unity in difference. It might also be characterised as 'non-duality tolerant of duality' (*bheda sahiṣṇu abheda*). For instance, the light which pervades a room is identical with the lamp burning in that room. If the light and the lamp were different from each other like the pot and the cloth, then with the removal of the lamp light should not vanish. Nor can they be regarded as purely identical, for whereas the burning lamp burns the objects, the light does not. Hence, they are both identical and different. This is the true nature of identity.

The nature of *tādātmya* consists in relating the two identicals which are apparently given as different. At first, the two are known to be different but afterwards they are recognized to be essentially identical. As long as they are regarded as two, they stand to each other in the relation of substance and attribute. The attribute itself is really identical with the substance. Identity might be compared to the relation which exists between the multi-coloured parts of a peacock's body when they are united with each other during the early stage of the plasma in the egg. It may also be compared to the relationship which holds between the various colours which exist as one with the rays of the sun. This constitutes the nature of sāmarasya or tādātmya, the relation which is the exemplar of all

1. Kalyāna, *Śakti Anka* p. 29.

relations in the world. A and B are first given as separate, later on we recognize them as identical. Although we proceed from difference to unity, we cannot reject difference as unreal. The difference between A and B, both of which are in reality identical, is also real. Although power is identical with the possessor, like salt and the sea-water, the distinction between them cannot be ignored.[1] Just as one *A* is perfectly identified with the other, in the assimilation of the following *A* with the preceding *A*, according to Paṇini's rule '*atogune*,' and it is only the analytical approach that brings out the distinction of the one from the other, so in the absolute *Anuttara* and *Anuttarā*, *Bhairava* and *Śakti*, are thoroughly identical.[2] There can be no real difference between Śiva and Śakti, both being perfectly identical. In reality, the difference between consciousness and its powers is purely imaginary and non-essential.[3] There can be no dualism of substance and attribute, for the distinction between them is merely imaginary. The supreme Being is always one with the principle of *spanda*, never otherwise.[4] Consciousness and its luminosity, though distinguishable like sun and light, are in reality always identical. Consciousness is luminosity and luminosity is consciousness. Just as the power of producing the tree is not different from its seed, similarly, the power of consciousness is non-different from consciousness. In the state of unity, all Śaktis remain in identity with consciousness.[5] Śakti is related to the Anuttara in the same way in which the creative energy of an individual is related to him. In the final analysis, it is nothing but self-consciousness in which the objective, which is but the grossification of the 'I', is present like flower in the seed.[6]

1. TA., II. 157,
2. Pandey, K. C., opp. cit. p. 666.
3. SD. I. ii. p. 5, TA. I. p. 109.···
4. SN. I. i.
5. SD. p. 10.
6. PTV., 45,vide Pandey, K.C. op. cit. p. 685.

Here the question may arise as to why should Śakti be admitted in the pure Being when it can be easily accounted for as a mere accident or adjunct ? In answer to this, the Śaivite states that as nothing can come out of nothing, or as *asat* cannot become *sat*, or as the *sat* cannot become *asat*, the supposed accidental power or Māyā Śakti must also have its source somehow in the Real. But this can be so, only if Śakti is regarded as one with its source or substratum, which is consciousness alone. Accordingly, the so-called accidental Śakti would be nothing but the inherent power of consciousness. Even in the state of transcendental reality Śakti exists as one with it. The main difficulty is that this state of reality is beyond the grasp of thought or speech. But commonsense and practice demand that that which is manifest in the empirical sphere must be regarded as being rooted in the Ultimate. The view that Śakti is unrelated to the absolute really amounts to an admission of dualism and, consequently, of nihilism. In order to avoid nihilism, we have to admit that consciousness and its power are inseparable, like fire and heat, or ice and cold.[1]

With regard to the question as to how can the absolute in itself may be regarded as powerful, the Śaivite points out that it is only from the standpoint of the finite individual that Parma Śiva is regarded as having infinite power (Śakti). Being and becoming, Prakāśa and Vimarśa, both appear as separate only in our finite experience. Hence, the distinction between them is possible only from our finite standpoint. The distinction between them presupposes their integral unity. In the absence of this unity, nothing would be manifest, and no practical life would be possible. However, the finite standpoint in which the two appear as distinct is also real. It is the Parama Śiva Himself who appears in these forms.

1. SD. III. vi. p. 100.

There is no relationship of parts or aspects in the absolute. In itself the absolute shines being absorbed in the experience of consciousness-bliss. During this state, this much experience (being absorbed in perfect egoity) constitutes His will, knowledge and action. Till the rise of the world-state, which is of the form of negation of oneness with the absolute and which is illusory, Śakti constitutes the form of Śiva. The view that prior to creation all the powers exist in the form of unity is established both on the basis of practical experience and on the principle of causation.[1]

But how can the Saktis be present in the non-dual state of reality without making any reference to it ? In answer to this question, the Saivite holds that the powers in this state do not require any object to operate upon. During the state of non-duality their existence and functioning coincide with the experience of *cit* and *ānanda*. Normally we infer the cause from the observation of the effect. The world effects which are given in experience point to their ultimate cause. It is only Sakti which can reasonably be supposed to be the ultimate cause of the world effects. From the actual we infer the potential; fire is potentially present in the combustible materials; the tree is present in the seed. Similarly, all the causes and effects, which constitute the universe, are potentially present in their ultimate cause. The concept of Sakti is, thus, necessary in order to explain the actual manifoldness of causes and effects. Although the question regarding the presence of Sakti in the Transcendent cannot, strictly speaking, be raised from the finite point of view, however, it has to be assumed that the Saktis are present even in the highest Reality. For, the effect must be potentially present in the cause.[2]

It might be asked here, if Śiva and Sakti are essentially identical, how do we make a distinction between them ? To this the Śaivite points out that in the realm of concepts

1. SD. I. 3-4.
2. Ibid

we always proceed from the given. From the effect we proceed to the cause. The world is there, given as a matter of fact. In our search for its cause we arrive at the conclusion that it is only the power of consciousness, Cit Śakti, which is non-different from consciousness, which alone can be regarded as the ultimate cause. The insentient cannot be a power in the ultimate sense. For the insentient always depends upon the sentient. The dual mode of description of the absolute, as consciousness and freedom, Śiva and Śakti, cannot be avoided. In the absence of this duality, even the affirmation of advaita would not be possible. Without the experience of duality, the experience of non-duality would have no meaning. The notion of duality is essential before we form the conception of non-duality. The Real is Eka, which means *samatā* or equilibrium. Though appearing as two, Śiva and Śakti are really one. There is no discord or difference between them. Consciousness and its luminosity, Śiva and Śakti, though identical and inseparable, like sun and its light, can be distinguished from the practical point of view. Tadātmya for the Śaiva Absolutist does not mean absolute identity or negation of distinction. Identity for him is non-difference in difference. First, we have the finite vision in which the two are distinguished. Later on, when we have the vision of Unity, the two are regarded as identical. In the beginning power and consciousness, Śakti and Śaktimān, are experienced separately. Later on they are found to be essentially identical.

Evolution of Sakti

The one universal Śakti itself appears in the form of different Śaktis during the state of worldly existence, as different-cum-non-different in the state of Sādhanā, and as non-different in the highest state of realization. These three states of manifestation of Śakti are described as *aparā*, *parāpara* and *parā avasthās*. In the *parā* state all the Śaktis are in absolute identity both between themselves and with Śiva. It is the state of eternal identity or supreme unity.

In this state, Śakti is manifest in the form of being-consciousness-bliss. All the other Śaktis are present as one with the power of consciousness and bliss, or Cit Śakti and Ānanda Śakti, which are fully manifest during the parāpara and aparā states also. The remaining three Śaktis, viz. *Icchā*, *Jñāna* and *Kriyā*, exist during this state in identity with Consciousness and Bliss. They can never exist independent of, nor separate from, the parā state which is pre-supposed in all states of experience. No experience whatsoever would be possible in the absence of the parā Śakti.

In the *parāpara* state, there is both unity and difference between the various Śaktis. During this state, *icchā* becomes fully manifest. When there arises self-consciousness (Cit Śakti) out of consciousness, bliss or ānanda becomes manifest. It is a function of the absolute Power and is of the nature of self-consciousness. It is not of the nature of sensuous pleasure but is absolute in every sense. The universe is a manifestation of Bliss-Consciousness. From this state arises *aunmukhya*, the first flicker of Will. It can be experienced in the states of rememberance, joy, anger, fear etc. Its external manifestation might be observed during the moment when the calm water becomes disturbed and there arise subtle vibrations in it. It is the slight stir in the undisturbed pure consciousness, such as it happens when the hand is about to close in a fist for attack. It is the earlier part of the manifestation of the will.

During the *aparā avasthā*, which is of the form of *unmeṣa*, or awakening, the powers of knowledge and action (Jñāna Śakti and Kriyā Śakti) become fully manifest. The will power opens up the cognitive faculty and there arises the power of knowledge (jñāna Śakti). In the beginning it is only pure and formless cognition as there is no object of knowledge. But henceforth the formless consciousness becomes informed with various forms. Later on, when Māyā Śakti gives rise to a variety of objects out of the pure flux of consciousness, there arises the power of action

(Kriyā Śakti). When the ideal 'this' appears split up into innumerable objects, the powers of knowledge, action, and self-limitation appear as *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*.[1]

In every manifestation, all the Śaktis work together. The activity of the following Śaktis also presupposes the working of the preceding Śaktis. For example, *cit* is presupposed by *ānanda*, ānanda by *icchā*, icchā by *jñāna* and jñāna by *kriyā*. Even if one Śakti be absent, no action would ever be possible. Hence it has to be assumed that in all objects and events, all these Śaktis are present in a state of Sāmarasya.[2] Though infinite in number, these Śaktis are mainly divided into five kinds. The Śaktis are of the nature of unity. Being composite in nature, like the Prakṛti of the Sāṁkhya, each Śakti has infinite number of Śaktis in it.[3] The entirety of these Śaktis constitutes the third eye of Śiva in the state of their complete fusion as *Bindu*.

According to the Vedānta, reality is the non-relational pure unity. If at all the world existence is to be explained, it can be possible only on the view that it is a manifestation of the absolute. Though ultimately all qualities are denied of Brahman, we may nevertheless consider it to be endowed with powers, only if we assume in its nature an element of duality, which is a figment of nescience. What is merely due to limiting adjuncts cannot constitute an attribute of a substance and the limiting adjuncts are, moreover, presented by nescience only. The primeval nescience leaves room for all practical life and activity.[4] The admission of Śakti, on the other hand, would introduce difference in the nature of pure differenceless Brahman. If Śakti and Śaktimān are really non-different, there is no justification for describing them in terms of duality. If they are regarded as inseparable aspects of a Whole, it would amount to an admission of

1. Pandey, KC., opp. cit. p. 673.
2. यदेकतरनियर्णि कार्यं जातु न जायते ।
तस्मात्सर्वपदार्थानां सामरस्यमवस्थितम् ॥ SD. I. 23.
3. ततश्च परमार्थत एकैव शक्तिः शक्त एवास्तीति प्रतिपादितम् । SD. I.19.
4. SB. III. ii. 16.

parts or aspects in the absolute. Nor is it correct to introduce substance-attribute relationship within the non-relational reality. It is even more difficult to conceive how Śakti can be present in the transcendental state in which none of its functions or characteristics are manifest. The Vedāntin insists upon the reality of the transcendental aspect of Brahman and regards its phenomenal aspect as unreal. Only in its latter aspect Brahman can be regarded as the source of world evolution and involution.

In the Vedānta logic Śakti itself is regarded as Māyā. Whatever suffers change has parts and is, therefore, composite. But that which is composite is liable to be destroyed and is, therefore, not self-existent. Moreover, the sublation of the superimposed entity shows that the entity is found to be absolutely unreal. The world which is superimposed upon Brahman is ultimately unreal. This analogy of superimposition can be extended to the whole phenomenal world on the basis of the declaration of the Scriptures.

As Prof. Murti holds, the transition from the real to the appearances could only be posited or presumed, as what must have transpired prior to the empirical experience. Thus, the function of avidyā can only be presumed. Though it is not known at the time of its formation, it is revealed at the time of its sublation. It is the principle of creativity (Vikśepa Śakti) owing to which the non-dual Unity appears as different. Although it is a necessary condition of phenomena, yet it is contingent in being; it is in being but not of it.[1] Otherwise, if avidyā were an integral part of Brahman, everything would be determined and necessary and the distinction between the necessary and contigent would be obliterated. There would be no temporal process, but only a logical sequence or equation. Any species of *integralism* is subject to this predicament.[2]

Avidyā or Māyā is the principle opposed to reason and incapable of standing the test of critical reflection.[3] Māyā

1. Murti, T. R. V., op. cit., Vedānta and Buddhism.
2. Ibid.
3. सेयं भ्रान्तिर्निरालम्बा सर्वन्यायविरोधिनी। सहते न बिचारा सा तमो यदवद दिवाकरम्। *Naiṣkarmya Siddhi*, III.66.

is the name for something which does not exist.[1] To know it through logic would be to illumine darkness with darkness. Māyā is without any real support and is opposed to all canons of reasoning. It cannot tolerate reason like darkness which cannot withstand light.[2] This tendency to shirk all proof is itself the true nature of avidyā (*avidyatva*). The potency of avidyā which gives rise to the manifestation of Brahman is called *avyakta*. Māyā is thus the avyakta Śakti of God. It is beginningless and is known through its effects. It is neither sat nor asat, nor both; neither it is different, nor identical, nor both; it is neither having parts, nor is it without parts. In itself it is strange and indescribable.[3] It has two potencies, viz. concealment and manifestation, or *āvaraṇa* and *vikśepa*.

The world is Māyā because it can neither be made out as a being of the nature of consciousness nor as different from it. If the world is real, then no amount of knowledge will remove it, and liberation would be impossible. The relation between Brahman and Māyā, like all relations, exists only within the sphere of illusion. But the question of relationship does not arise when illusion is cancelled. Brahman is not merely the passive ground of the illusion as the rope is of the snake. The world illusion has no existence apart from pure consciousness.

In contrast with the Vedānta, the Śaiva Absolutist holds that Māyā is nothing but an appearance of the divine Śakti. When it exists in identity with Śiva, prior to creation, it is known as *Śakti Māyā*, the divine freedom itself. It is known as *Tattva Māyā* when is manifest as the world. Further, when it is manifest into different parts, it is known as *Granthi Māyā*.

Like the Vedāntin, the Śaivite also regards Śakti as *acintya* or indescribable. Śakti veils Śiva's real nature,

1. Saṁkara's Com. on Gauḍapāda Kārikā, IV. 58.
2. *Naiṣkarmya Siddhi,* II. 66.
3. *Viveka Cudāmaṇi,* 11, 111.

when He, of his own free will, enters into the condition of a finite soul by imposing thereupon the three defilements.[1]

Māyā Śakti is the principle which is responsible for the appearance of the not-self in the self. It is of the nature of negation or darkness Owing to it, the true nature of the self is concealed. In itself it is the negation of Bliss and is of the form of the power of action.[2] However, in order to avoid dualism, Māyā Śakti has to be regarded as the essential nature of Reality. We can solve dualism either by postulating an illusory power, Māyā Śakti, or by assuming an inherent Śakti in Śiva. While the Vedāntin has recourse to the former alternative, the Śaivite prefers the latter. He calls Māyā those manifestations which cannot reasonably be explained.[3]

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1. परमं यत् स्वातन्त्र्यं
दुर्घटसम्पादनं महेशस्य ।
देवी मायाशक्तिः ।
स्वात्मावरणं शिवस्यैतत् ॥ PS. Kārikā 15.
माया च नाम देवस्य शक्तिव्यतिरेकिणी ।
भेदावभासस्वातंत्र्यं तथा हि स तया कृतः ॥ TA. III. 116.
2. मोहयति अनेनशक्तिविशेषेण इति वा मोहो मायाशक्तिः····। IPV. I.I.
सैव भगवतो माया विमोहिनी नाम शक्तिः । op. cit.
3. अनुपपन्नम् अवभासनं माया इति उच्यते, ततश्च भिन्नं प्रकाशात् सर्वं अवभासजातं माया, तत्र च चित्तत्त्वस्यैव स्वातन्त्र्यं मायाशक्तिः, ·। IPV. I. v. 18.
मीयते-परिच्छिद्यते धरान्तः प्रमातृप्रमेयप्रपञ्चो यया सा माया; विश्वमोहकतया वा माया । एषा देवस्य क्रीडाशोलस्य संबन्धिनी-इति कृत्वा 'देवी', न पुनः ब्रह्मवादिनामिव व्यतिरिक्ता काचित् माया उपपद्यते-इति । कीदृशं तत् स्वातन्त्र्यं ? 'दुर्घटसंपादनम्' इति । PS. P. 44.

PART IV

THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

CHAPTER NINE

THE NATURE OF SELF

1. Knowledge of the Self

'Know thyself' has been the key-note of Indian Thought. The realization of the true Self has been the principal aim of philosophising in India. Ādhyātma Vidyā could be regarded as a kingly science, the royal secret. It supplies the only sanction and support to righteousness and its benefit may be seen even with the eye as bringing peace and permanent happiness.[1] The sages, therefore, sought for the permanent self which alone was valuable in the midst of mundane changes. Their metaphysical quest represented a restless yearning for the vision of highest Self (*ātma darśana*). Philosophical discussion was supposed to be valuable only in so far as it helped in the attempts at realising the self.[2]

The aim of both Śaiva and Vedānta Absolutisms is to help the individual in attaining self-realisation. Since liberation is possible only through a correct knowledge of the true nature of the self and world existence is due to incorrect knowledge, the Śaiva thinkers propose to analyse the true nature of the self bit by bit.[3]

The entering into one's own real nature, i. e. realisation of oneness with his true self, which is of the nature of

1. Gītā, IX. 2.
2. 'The science of self is the religion and philosophy of India. This science recognises the unity of all life—one source, one essence, and one goal—and regards the realisation of this unity as the highest good, bliss, salvation, freedom, the final purpose of life. This is eternal life, not an eternity of time, but the recognition here and now of all things in the Self and the Self in all.' Coomaraswamy, A., *Dance of Śiva*, p. 27.
3. अस्यैव सम्यक् स्वरूपज्ञानात् यतो मुक्तिः, असम्यक् तु संसारः, ततः तिलश एतत्स्वरूपं निर्भङ्क्तुमाह··· ।
PH., VII, pp. 51-8.

Śiva and is the highest object of achievement, is possible when the limited subject knows what to shun and what to seek after, as also what is his real nature. Then one gets liberation right in his life time.

How can the self, which is essentially the subject of all knowledge, itself become an object of knowledge ? How can the knower be known ? Consideration of such questions leads us to the recognition of the primacy of the knower in all knowing. The object which is not an object for a subject is nothing in itself. The Self is presupposed in all distinctions, such as between form and matter, reality and appearance, subject and object, and so on. Considered in this light, the Self may be called the centre of an indefinite number of concentric circles, each periphery being occupied by different class of objects.[2] Kant rightly held that noumenal Self is unknown and unknowable. In order to explain the phenomena of knowledge, we have to admit the transcendental unity of consciousness. The phenomenal self is not the real subject, which cannot become an object either of experience or of reason.

The Indian thinkers, however, assert that the self, though not an object of knowledge, is immediately present in all experience. Therefore, it cannot be regarded as wholly unknown. Those thinkers who assert that the permanent self is never found in empirical experience are wrong. For, they fail to recognise that the self which is supra-logical cannot be given as an object in experience. It is the infinite, the *Bhūmā*, which cannot be an object of empirical knowledge. Though it is not an object of knowledge, the self is not unknowable. The very denial of self proves its existence. Everybody is conscious of the self, nobody thinks 'I am not.'[3] The very existence and functioning of understanding presupposes the self which is

1. Bhāskarī, vol. II, p. 244.
2. Mukherjee, A. C., *The Nature of Self*, pp. 6-9.
3. सर्वो हि आत्मस्तित्वम् प्रत्येति न नाहम् अस्मीति···। SB. I. i. 1,

different from them and which is self-established.[1] The self is the essential nature of one who doubts it.[2] The knower cannot be subject to change ; eternal existence is its very nature.[3] It cannot be grasped through the categories of thought. To attempt to do so, would be like attempting to roll up the sky like a skin, or to ascend the space like a staircase, or to trace the footprints of fish in water, or of birds in sky.[4] The Self has been described as immediate experience ; it is intuitively given in every experience as its veiled background.[5]

Being the presupposition of all proof, the Self cannot be proved. Its existence is known on account of its immediate presentation. Proving the Self cannot mean bringing it into being, for it is eternal. If it is held that the Self is not essentially sentient, then also we cannot prove its existence. That which is insentient cannot shine by itself. Like a stone it cannot prove or disprove anything. The Self being essentially self-luminous, the means of right knowledge cannot operate with regard to it. Just as there can be no activity of causal agent in relation to the Supreme Lord, similarly there can be neither that of the means of right knowledge as He is self-shining.[6] By its very nature the Pramāṇa cannot operate in the case of the Self. Pramāṇa is so called because of its appearing ever anew and bringing about the rest of the object in the subject, which is called Pramiti. And the subject, being of unbroken light, has all the Pramitis in His introvert aspect. How then can Pramāṇa which appears ever anew operate in his case ? Where will rest Pramiti which owes its existence to the former ? Pramāṇa is possible only in the case of subject limited by body etc. And here too, it operates only on the objective aspect, not on the subject. With

1. SB. II. iii. 7; I. iii. 32.
2. य एव हि निराकर्ता तस्यैवात्मकत्वात् ।
3. न तु ज्ञातुरन्यथा भावोऽस्ति सर्वदा वर्तमान्स्वभावत्वात् । SB. II. iii 7.
4. Atreyabhāṣya, II. i. Intr.
5. Bṛh. up. III. v. 1; Kena up. II. iv; Pañcadaśī I. 11.
6. IPV. I. i. 1.

regard to the subjective aspect, one's own experience alone is the means.[1]

The Śaivite holds that the Self is essentially free. If it is said that it is essentially of the nature of pure unchanging consciousness, then the differentiation of cognition and putting together of the differentiated would not be possible. It has to be admitted that the Self shines in the form of the objects and yet remains free from all limitation.

2. Discrimination between Self and not-Self.

The Śaivite adopts integral method of distinguishing the Self from the not-Self in order to arrive at the true nature of Self. According to him, the different conceptions of Self, as formulated in the various systems of thought, do not adequately represent the true nature of Self. These conceptions might be described as the different roles which the Highest Self itself assumes owing to its sportive nature. Although these conceptions, when taken by themselves, are incomplete, they are partially true representations of the nature of Self. In support of his view, the Śaivite gives the illustration of the actor and the various roles played by him in the drama.[2] All theories about the nature of Self, including that of the Cārvaka, no matter how much removed from the highest truth they may be, are partially true. Each of them succeeds in representing some aspect of Self. Every philosopher has realised the Self in one of its impersonations and is, therefore, in possession of some truth. However, in order to realise the Highest Self, one has to transcend these finite standpoints, which are the roles through which the Subject disguises Himself. For, 'it is darkness upon darkness, a great fistula upon a boil, when that which is not really the Self, such as body, breath etc., is imagined to be the Self.'[3]

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1 IPV. II. III. 16.

2. तद्भूमिकाः सर्वदर्शनस्थितयः ॥ 'सर्वेषां' चार्वाकादिदर्शनानां स्थितयः, सिद्धान्ताः 'तस्य' एतस्य आत्मनो नटस्येव स्वेच्छावगृहीता कृत्रिमा 'भूमिकाः' । PH. VIII.

3. PS. Kārikā 3.

While attaining the higher visions of the Self in the Śaiva tradition, the lower visions are not rejected but are included in the higher visions. The higher visions include all the lower visions. In the highest and perfect vision of the Self, all the finite views or standpoints are recognised to be the manifestations of the Supreme Self. 'It is the Supreme Self, the Parama Śiva, in all the different experiences of the Self, as syrup, molasses, jaggery, sugarballs etc. are all alike juices of the sugarcane.[1]

These various roles are the disguises in which the self hides itself like an actor and keeps them apart because of its free will.[2] It is because of this disguise that the materialist holds that the *ātman* is identical with the physical body which is characterised by consciousness.[3] There are some who regard the Self as the vital breath (*prāṇa*), as they think that without *prāṇa* body cannot function. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika regards the Self to be almost identical with the substratum of the group of qualities beginning with jñāna etc. as long as it is in the wordly state ; in the end when its connection with *buddhi* etc. is severed, it is supposed to be almost identical with the void. The Mīmāṁsaka also stops with the notion of intelligence. Similarly, the Buddhist too arrives at the function of intelligence and regards the flux of cognition to be ultimate.[4] The Śūnyavādins regard the Self to be something like void. According to them, pleasure, pain etc. are determinations of intelligence; the Self is that where all determinations cease.[5] The Brahmavādins, who believe in 'nihilism' and hold that 'this universe was non-existent', also arrive at the concept

1. Idid. Kārikā 26.
2. PH. VIII,
3. PS, pp. 69-72.
4. ज्ञानसन्तान एव तत्त्वम्-इति सौगता बुद्धिवृत्तिषु एव पर्यवसिता: । PH. op. cit.
5. एतत् सुखदु:खाद्यपि बुद्धिधर्म: । कथम् आत्मतया वक्तुं शक्य: ? ततो देह-प्राण-धीविकल्पानां यत्र अभाव: स आत्मा,-इति शून्याभिमानिन: । PS. op. cit.

of void and remain content with it.[1] The Pañcarātras too stop at the notion of *avyakta*. The Sāṁkhya and others arrive at the sphere of *Vijñānākalas* and cling to it. The Grammarians prefer the sphere of Sadāśiva and describe the Self as the absolute 'Word'. However, in the final analysis all these philosophers hold the insentient to be the Self.[2] For, the Self which is devoid of the power of consiousness is as good as the insentient.

So far, we have mentioned the views of non-Āgamic systems only. The followers of the Tantras advance further than these systems and regard the Self as transcendent. But those who follow the principal texts of the sacred traditions regard the Self as immanent. The highest view, which is held by those who know the Trika and the allied systems, is that the Ātman is both transcendent and immanent simultaneously.[3]

These various roles, which are assumed by the Subject owing to its own free will, represent the various grades of reality. These roles form an ascending order of existence, depending upon the extent to which freedom is revealed in each state. The lowest or narrowest vision of the Self is attained by the materialist, wherein the freedom of Self is completely concealed. Similarly, the highest or all-inclusive vision of the Self is achieved in the Trika, wherein freedom is completely revealed.[4] In reality, the Self is always one, though it may appear to be of various forms. It is due to the will of the Lord that persons having limited visions arrogate to themselves a view of their own in accordance with their partisan standpoint.

1. असदेव इदमासीत्-इत्यभावब्रह्मवादिन: शून्यमुपमवगाह्य स्थिता: ।··· सांख्यादयस्तु विज्ञानाकलप्रायां भूमिम् अवलम्बन्ते ।···शब्दब्रह्ममयं पश्यन्ती-रूपं आत्मतत्त्वं-इति वैयाकरणा: श्रीसदाशिवपदमध्यासिता: । PH. pp. 54-6.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. एवम् एकस्यैव चिदात्मनो भगवत: स्वातंत्र्यावभासिता: सर्वाइमा भूमिका: स्वातंत्र्यप्रच्छादनोन्मीलनतारतम्यभेदिता: । Ibid.

It is due to this reason that such persons are unable to comprehend the great pervasion of the Ātman, unless the highest Śakti descends upon them. Though the Self pervades all the lower spheres of body etc , and is self-evident, these persons do not realise its real nature. Māyā indeed misleads them in bondage, utilizing just their craving for liberation.

The Śaiva way of discrimination between the Self and the not-Self might be described as an *integral* method. According to this method the not-Self is not really opposed to the Self. Nothing can be separate or independent of Self. Whatever is known or imagined is not different from the Self, which cannot be limited by any of its objective manifestations. The witness self, the ego, the void, or the 'Śūnya' are mere manifestations of the Self Whatever is given in experience is, for that very reason, a manifestation of the Self. Though it is always and everywhere transcendent, the Self is at the same time immanent in everything. Being both immanent and transcendent, it appears as both the manifest and the agent of manifestation. It is manifest in every experience as an object of cognition. It remains manifest as the experiencing subject. The Self is of the nature of Supreme Egoity or the Supreme experiencer and always shines in the form of knower, known, act of knowing and the transcendent (*anākhya*).[1]

According to Vedānta everything which becomes an object of knowledge is ultimately unreal. For, that which is experienced or known is for that very reason false. Even the awareness that 'I am Brahman' belongs to the intellect which is mutable and not to the Ātman which is changeless witness consciousness. Nor is the bliss of Ātman known in liberation ; for, if the Self cognizes the bliss in liberation, it will contradict its non-duality.[2] The Self is of the nature of bliss itself. A person knows that the highest Self is identical with his own Self merely through

1. TA. III. 125.
2. Śaṁkara' s Comm. on Bṛh. up. III. x.

negation of the notion 'I am the suffering Jīva'.[1] Thus, we can get the notion of the Ātman if we divest it of all that surrounds it, discriminate it from the not-self, from the bodily frame with which it is encompassed, and strip it of all contents of experience.[2] For, the Self is always silent. When by the practice of discipline outlined in the Vedānta texts all duality is negated, all that remains is the Self alone. The Self does not tolerate any other entity outside of it, nor does it have any internal distinctions. When by discarding the aggregate of body, mind, sense organs etc. one arrives at the knowledge that he himself is not the aggregate and that he does not form part of the transmigratory existence, but is the true and real Self, he lifts himself above the vain conceit of being one with the body and realizes his true Self.[3]

The Vedānta retains the Sāṁkhya method of discrimination between Self and not-Self. Before the rise of discriminative knowledge the real nature of the soul, which is pure light, is not discriminated as it were from its limiting adjuncts consisting of body, senses, mind, sense objects and feeling, and appears as consisting of the energies of seeing, and so on.[4] When discrimination takes place, (the Self is taken to be the witness of physical and mental states, as one and the same witness or knower of all the appearances.[5] Hence the Self should be distinguished from the not-Self. Throughout the analysis of the meaning of the 'I' the Vedāntin adopts the criterion that the essence of a thing is that which persists through all the states of the thing.[6] What is common to body, senses, mind etc. is consciousness. Pure consciousness, though it might appear in a multitude of forms, alone is the essence of Self. The method which enables us to have a clear knowledge of the Self has been

1. Udadeśa Sahaarāri. XVI I. 189.
2. Radhakrishnan, S., *Indian Philosophy*, I, p. 480.
3. SB. I. iii. 19, III. ii. 17.
4. Ibid.
5. Upadeśa Sah. XV. 12. also NS. II. 89.
6. एक रूपेण हि अवस्थितो योऽर्थः स परमार्थः... । SB. II. i, 11,

called *Adhyāropavāda*. It is the method of figurative superimposition followed by subsequent negation. First beginning with the assertion that the body is the self, we proceed from one not-self to the other till we arrive at the notion of the highest Self and describe it as that which does not think and move, but thinks as it were, moves as it were.[1]

The body cannot be the Self. For, even when the body exists, there is no cognition without senses. When the soul departs the body also gets destroyed.[2] Moreover, if the body be regarded as substratum of consciousness, the phenomena of memory cannot be explained.[3] Nor can the body be regarded as the material cause of consciousness. It is equally wrong to identify the Self with the senses. There can be no personal identity or self-consciousness, if there were as many selves as the senses. Moreover, various qualities such as colour, sweetness, hardness etc. would be experienced simultaneously and not successively. Further, there are cases like dream, sleep, etc. in which consciousness is present even when senses are inactive. The fact is that senses are always dependent upon the self. It is the 'I' which sees through the eye, hears through the ear, and so on. That is why people say : 'My ear is deaf,' 'my eye is blind', 'I who saw the thing am now touching it'. The fact that the mere sight or smell of some delicious food produces a pleasant feeling in the perceiver further indicates that the Self is different from the senses.

Nor can the self be identified with the vital airs (Prāṇa), in the absence of which body and senses do not function. If Prāṇa were the self it should direct the senses even in sleep. Similarly, the self cannot be identified with the mind which is the organ for the internal perception of pleasure and pain only. The knower cannot be identified with the instruments of knowledge. Mind cannot be the substrate

1. Ibid. II. iii. 30.
2. Pañcadaśī, VI. 62.
3. Kusumāñjalī. I. 15.

of knowledge. Nor can the Self be identified with Śūnya which cannot be the substrate of the cognition 'I'. As the sun shines without anything to shine upon, the Self has consciousness even when there is no object.[1] The empirical ego cannot constitute the real nature of the Self. Self-consciousness is not prior to knowledge, it is itself an object of knowledge.[2] While the self is independent of self-consciousness, self-consciousness is always dependent upon the self.[3] It would be contradictory to hold that the Self is the subject as well as object. The self can be object to itself only if we regard objectivity as a superimposition. The objective element in consciousness is false, the subjective alone is real.[4] To say that the self is self-conscious only means that it does not depend for its revelation upon anything else. Were the self really identical with egoity, it would have been so manifest even in deep sleep. In this state there is no self-consciousness ; pure consciousness alone shines here. The presentation of egoity just before and after deep sleep is due to nescience which is impregnated with the impressions of past awareness of bliss.[5] To say that the self and egoity are identical is to disregard the facts of deep sleep, swoon and other states in which there is no self-consciousness. The concept of egoity involves self-contradiction. The subject cannot be identified with the object. The subject is so called because it is not the object. The self is pure consciousness; everything else except the self is false.

3. The True Nature of Self

The Śaivite holds that the Self in its essential nature is identical with the highest Lord. This, according to him, is established on the basis of self-experience, reason and scriptures.[6] The absolute reality is not alien to the individual

1. SB. II. iii. 18.
2. Ibid. iii. 40.
3. Ibid. II. ii. 28.
4. Rai Chaudhuri A. K., op. cit. pp. 53-6.
5. Ibid.
6. एवं स्वसंवेदनोपपत्त्यागमसिद्धं महेश्वररूपमात्मस्वरूपं··· ।
Bhāskarī, II. p. 280.

self. In fact, it alone is the real essence of the individual. Because of its association with the darkness of ignorance, the self conceives itself in manifold diversity as subject and object, whereas in reality it is one and identical.[1]

As we have already seen, the Śaivite adopts the integral method in order to arrive at the notion of the highest Self. The Vedāntin, on the other hand, employs mainly the method of discrimination when he conceives the self as witness consciousness. Because of this difference in the methodology of the two systems, there develop two different conceptions about the nature of the self. According to the Śaiva absolutist, the self is the all-inclusive, integral and supreme self-consciousness. In the Vedānta, on the contrary, the self is regarded as pure consciousness. The Śaivite holds that perfection (*pūrṇatva*) constitutes the essential nature of the self, which is of the nature of free consciousness. Owing to its nature as vimarśa, the self is fully conscious of itself. It is the supreme Unity which is the universal subject and object of all congition. Its essential nature consists in the rapture of supreme egoity (*pūrṇa ahaṁtā camatkāra*), as opposed to the fictitious egoism of the finite self. It is absolute ego which is both immanent and transcendent. It is the perfect equilibrium of consciousness and freedom, intelligence and bliss.

The self cannot be of the nature of fleeting consciousness; nor can it be of the nature of pure witness consciousness. The self in its essential nature is free consciousness. The entire practical life depends upon consciousness which is essentially free. The changing and the witness consciousness cannot be possible if the self does not possess the power of freedom. All flux presupposes some unchanging background. In order that the varying cognitions may

1. अज्ञान-तिमिरयोगाद्
एकमपि स्वं स्वभावमात्मानम् ।
ग्राह्य-ग्राहकनाना-
वैचित्र्येणावबुध्येत ॥ PS Kārikā 25.

take place, it has to be admitted that consciousness is unitary and eternal. But, we also cannot deny the changing aspect of consciousness. For, even the pure witness self cannot be established if we deny the fluctuating consciousness. The pure witness self, which is devoid of freedom, is as good as the insentient. It can neither be proved nor disproved. No knowledge would be possible on the basis of such self. The Vedāntin and the Buddhist both are wrong in so far as they neglect the one or the other aspect of the self. The Śaivite holds that in order to avoid the mistakes committed by such thinkers it has to be accepted that the self is essentially of the nature of Prakāśa Vimarśa. Freedom, omnipotence and self-consciousness constitute the essential nature of the Self which is nothing but the highest Lord, Parama Śiva.

Through the Vedānta logic, however, we arrive at a different conclusion. The true self is not something wholly unknown : it is universal and all-pervasive. It is fully and wholly present in all experience. The method of persistence and variation (*anuvṛtti* and *vyāvṛtti*) proves that the self alone is real. The adjuncts of consciousness are products of avidyā. The self is different from the adjuncts.[1] Pure self-luminosity is the only essential characteristic of the self[2] Pure consciousness is the persistent factor in the various states, such as waking, dreaming, sleep, etc., of the self. The principle is that whatever persists when others are changing is different from others, just as the thread that persists is different from the changing flowers which are strung together by it. The essential nature of the self is existence-consciousness-bliss.[3] Being, consciousness and bliss indicate the very nature of the self and thus differentiate it from all objects in the world.[4] They do not determine the self but merely point to it. Directly referring to the

1. Rai Chaudhuri, A. K., opp. cit. p. 42.
2. SB. I iii. 22, also Śaṁkara' s Comm. on Prasna Up. VI. 3.
3. अस्ति, भाति, प्रीणाति···। Śaṁkara' s Comm. on Tait. Up. II. 1.
4. Ibid.

self, each of them independently expresses the full nature of self.[1] They also show that the self is not their opposite.

The self cannot be conceived as a substance possessed of attributes, because the substance-attribute notion signifies a relation and relation always implies distinction. There is no distinction or difference in the self. The self is one and partless. That which is composite and have parts is perishable. The self, on the other hand, is universal and all-pervading. As such there cannot be a plurality of selves. The distinct feeling of pleasure and pain in different selves can be accounted for on the notion of adjuncts of the all-pervading self.[2]

Activity or agency cannot be ascribed to self. Action cannot be possible without modifying the agent.[3] Moreover, action which is motivated by desire is ultimately painful.[4] Agency, which belongs to the realm of relativity, presupposes a limitation of the self, body etc. Therefore, the self by itself does not have any activity. The activity of the soul depends only on the qualities of the adjuncts being ascribed to it and not to its own nature[5] Like the Śaivite, the Vedāntin also contends that the entire practical experience ultimately depends upon the self which is of the nature of witness consciousness. All phenomena can be accounted for on the theory of pure consciousness which is the very presupposition of all experience.[6] Everything in the world ultimately depends upon the Self.[7]

4. Atman and Jiva

Here the question arises as to how can the Self, which has been identified with the absolute or *Saccidānanda* in both

1. Ibid.
2. Madhusudana's Comm. on the Gītā, II. 13.
3, SB. I. i. 4.
4. कर्तृत्वस्य दुःखरूपत्वात् । SB. II. iii. 40. कर्म हेतुः कामः स्यात् । Intr to Tait. Up.
5. तस्मात् उपाधिधर्मं अध्यासेनैवात्मनः कर्तृत्वम् न स्वाभाविकम् । SB. II. iii 40.
6. Śaṁkara's Comm. on Mand. Up. II. 7.
7. SB. I. i. 1.

the systems, appear as the limited self or jīva ? What constitutes the relationship between the self or ātman and the jīva ?

According to Śaiva Absolutism the highest Self appears as the limited individual (*paśu* or jīva) when it becomes defiled by the impurities of Māyā.[1] Due to the free will of the Lord, the universal vision loses its omniscience and becomes '*aṇu*,' i.e., it assumes the *āṇava* defilements which consists in the non-intuition of its real nature. It becomes manifest as limited because of its being cut off from absolute consciousness, as the ether confined in the jar becomes limited by being cut off from the universal ether.[2] Thus, it becomes the individual who is subject to the fetters of three defilements—*Āṇava*, *Māyā* and *Karma*. Prior to such defilement, the Self exists in its own absolute nature throughout the pure order of creation (beginning from the Śiva tattva to the Vidyā tattva) which consists in the rapture of supreme egoity.[3] It is the absolute Self which dwells within the gross body as the experiencer of pleasure and pain. The individual is the ātman itself, who like an actor conceals its real nature and enters the stage of embodied existence.[4] It is the supreme Self which is present in all the different experiences of the self like syrup, molasses, sugar-balls etc. which are all alike juices of the sugarcane. In all these states, it is the juice of the sugarcane which is manifest in different forms. Similarly in all the states of existence of the finite subject, whether it is waking etc., or subject-object form, it is the highest Self which is present.[5] The

1. मायापरिग्रहवशाद्
   बोधो मलिन: पुमान् पशुर्भवति । PS. Kārikā 16.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. Kārikā 5.
5. रस-फाणित-शर्करिका-
   गुड खण्डाद्या यथेक्षुरस एव ।
   तद्वद् अवस्थाभेदा:
   सर्वे परमात्मन: शंभो: ॥ Ibid. Kārikā 26.

self-created forms are in reality non-different from the self. Just as the moon's image moves in the moving water, similarly the self also moves through the series of bodies, organs and the world.[1] Because of ignorance, the self appears as diverse, whereas in reality it is always identical.[2] While active as subject of all perception, the self still remains self-identical. For, nothing is really different from the self.[3]

As regards the question, how the self which is absolute and pure consciousness can appear in a multiple form of experiencer and experienced, the Śaivite holds that the individual souls which undergo differentiation in joy and sorrow do not affect the absolute self, just as the ether does not become defiled because of its defilement in different jars.[4] From the aggregate of modes, which constitute his own person, the Lord converts some into the subject of thought by infusing finite egoity in them by His power of Māyā while making others the objects of thought.[5] Though it appears to be very strange, the self evolves itself in the various forms of subject and object. In the final analysis, *svātantrya* alone can be regarded as the cause of limitation of self.[6]

We have already seen that the individuality of the self is a creation of Māyā and is a phenomenon in the realm of impure creation. Māyā obscures and limits the Experiencer both in regard to what is experienced and the experiencing subject. It is like the experience of falling asleep. When the subject falls asleep, he is overtaken by

1. Ibid. Kārikā 6.
2. Ibid. Kārikā 25.
3. यतः स एव भगवान् सर्वस्य स्वात्मभूतः स्वस्वातन्त्र्यात् तां तामपि भूमिकां समापन्नः, तथा ग्राह्य-ग्राहकाद्यवस्थाविशिष्टः प्रथते, यथा इक्षुरसः; न पुनः स्वात्मनः तस्मात् भिन्नं किंचित् अस्ति,—इति स एक एव, सर्वावस्थासु संविदनुगमात् । Ibid. p. 58
4. Ibid. pp. 42-5
5. Ibid.
6. PS. Kārikā 33.

the power of Māyā. Consequently there takes place a limitation in the nature of the subject and the object of experience. Simultaneously, there also takes place a change in the relationship between the Experiencer and its universal experience. In place of eternity or *nityatva* there arises time or *kāla*; universality is replaced by order or regulation (*niyati*); in place of all-interestedness, there arises limited interest (*rāga*) which causes dissatisfaction; omniscience appears as limited consciousness (vidyā); omnipotence is replaced by the finite power of action.[1] Thus, when the self becomes manifest as limited its experience also becomes limited. The experiencer thus put to sleep by Māyā and forgetting his own divinity and glory, and being wrapped up by the five limitations, becomes manifest as a limited individual. The five wraps together with Māyā are called the six sheaths or cloaks (*kañcukas*) covering the individual.[2] In this state of experience the experiencer is called Puruṣa, the limited individual self. Each of these numberless Puruṣas becomes an *aṇu*, a non-spatial point, because of obscuration, limitation, differentiation and multiplication by Māyā.[3]

The powers of being, self-consciousness and action of the self become limited in the individual subject. That aspect of self's power which is bliss of being becomes manifest as *sattva* when it appears as the light of knowledge and pleasure in the individual. The apparent negation of consciousness and bliss is manifest as *tamas*. Although sattva and tamas mutually exclude each other, like blue and its negation, yet they shine also as mixed up with each other like different colours harmoniously mixed up in a bird of variegated plumage. Accordingly, that which consists of sattva and tamas, and is of a mixed nature, is

1. यदा 'चिदात्मा' परमेश्वरः स्वस्वातन्त्र्यात् अभेदव्याप्ति निमज्ज्य भेदव्याप्तिम् अवलम्बते, तदा 'तदीया इच्छादिशक्तयः' असंकुचिता अपि 'संकोचवत्यो, भान्ति; तदानीमेव च अयं 'मलावृतः संसारी' भवति । PH. p. 58.

2. PS. Kārikā 34.

3. Chatterjee, J. C., op. cit. pp. 74-87.

called *rajas*. It is of the nature of pain, because in it sattva and tamas are mixed together. For example, the consciousness of son as dear is sattva, which is pleasure; the total absence of it is *moha*; consciousness of some other aspect such as his body being subjected to disease is pain. There is no state of the limited subject which is free from both sattva and rajas.[1]

Because of its free will the absolute presents itself at the stages of seven kinds of experiencers and their respective experiences[2] In accordance with their association with the three impurities, the individuals are classified into seven categories. Thus, because of each of the three impurities separately, and three groups consisting of two impurities each, and one group consisting of all three impurities, there arise seven kinds of subjects from *Śiva* to *Sakala*. The three impurities separately give rise to three experiencers, viz., *Śiva*, *Maheśvara* and *Mantreśvara*. In grouping of two each, these impurities give rise to three more subjects, viz. *Vidyeśa*, *Vijñānākala* and *Pralayākala*. All the three impurities combined together give rise to the seventh experiencer called *Sakala*.[3] Of these, first four belong to the state of pure creation. The Vijñānākalas belong to the transitional state between pure and impure creation. The Sakala and Pralayākala, on the other hand, belong to the realm of impure creation. During the state of creation the self is called Sakala as it is subject to all the three impurities. In the state of Pralaya it is called Pralayākala as it does not have the covering of Māyā. During this state the various means of enjoyment for the Self, which are the effects of Māyā, are dissolved in order to provide rest for the individual souls. It also leads to the maturation of the various Karmas and re-invigorates the potencies of Māyā. Here, although the Karmas are not

1. IPV.
2. SN. I. i.
3. एवं मलत्रयस्यैकैकभेदेन द्विभेदेन त्रिभेदेन च, इति सप्त प्रमातारः उत्तिष्ठन्ति । IPV. III. ii. 10; PS. Kārikā 23. PH. III.

really destroyed, all the individuals exist in a state devoid of Karmas. The souls whose impurities have not yet ripened wait in this state till the beginning of another creation. When Māyā again evolves the world these souls appear in the world as Sakala. Some of these souls assume the governing powers (*adhikāra*) when their impurity becomes ripe.[1]

Although the Self is not conscious of its perfection when it is manifest as limited, in reality it is always perfect. The limited self is called Puruṣa because Puruṣa is essentially nothing more than the ignorance of being perfect in reality. It is because of the limitation through association with different bodies, vital airs, buddhi etc. that Puruṣas are many.[2] Though apparently the sentient appears to be multiple, its multiplicity is due to the limiting conditions constituted by body etc. which are essentially insentient. Hence, its multiplicity is unreal, because it involves the logical fallacy called *anyonyāśraya*. For, the variety of the sentient is due to the variety of the insentient and the difference of the insentient is due to that of the sentient, e.g. 'this is his body', 'this is his object of knowledge'.[3] Therefore, it is established that all the individual subjects are really one and that subject is characterised by life. And life consists in doing the act of living, in the form of knowing and acting. For only he is said to be living who knows and acts. Therefore, the individual subject is to be looked upon as the Lord. Like the Lord, of whom we know from Paurāṇic and Āgamic traditions, he too possesses the powers of knowledge and action. Even if he be not known as such

1. Bhāratiya Samskrit aur Sādhanā, p. 31.
2. अत एवानेक: तत्तद्देहप्राणबुद्धिविशेषेण संकोचग्रहणात् । IPV. IV 3.
3. अत एव घटशरीरप्राणसुखतदभावरूपं सत् यल्लग्नं भाति तदेव जीवरूपंभूतं सत्यम्; तस्य च आपाते यद्यपि बहुत्वं भाति तथापि तत् जडात्मकवेद्यशरीराद्युपाधे: । ततस्तत् अपारमार्थिकम् अन्योन्याश्रयात्, जीवा हि जड़भेदात् भेदभागिन: जडाश्च जीवभेदात्, एतद्देहोऽयम् एतद्वेद्योऽयम्-इति भेदम् उपेयु:…। Ibid. Bhāskarī I. p. 66.

from the tradition, he has to be admitted as such on the basis of inference.[1] The self-luminous consciousness being the essential nature of the subject, the light of consciousness which is associated with another person at the empirical level is really non different from the light of consciousness of the knowing subject. The otherness is only due to the limiting conditions. And if we analyse rationally we would find that the limiting condition itself is non-different from the self. Hence, all subjects are one. That One alone is real. It is one and the same self that shines as one's own self as well as the self of others.[2]

Analysis of the Four States

Through an analysis of the different states of experience, the Śaivite arrives at the conclusion that it is the highest Self which reveals itself during these states. Waking, dreaming and deep sleep, which are like creation, maintenance and dissolution, appear in Him in the Fourth abode.[3] These three states originate from the Self, which is of the nature of the Fourth and is pure Bliss, the Supreme Egoity. These states correspond to the different stages of manifestation. Waking state corresponds to the condition of impure Māyā, dreaming to that of pure knowledge, dreamless to Īśvara and the Fourth to Sadāśiva. All these conditions are present in the consciousness of the Lord in the *Fourth* state, in which He is pure Bliss. Their presence in this state does not suppress His real nature, for He reveals Himself everywhere as higher and more inclusive than they, as the universal subject of all knowledge. 'If you really observe', tells

1. तदयं प्रमाता ज्ञानक्रियाशक्तियोगाद् ईश्वर-इति व्यवहर्तव्य: पुराणागमादिप्रसिद्धेश्वरवत्; तदप्रसिद्धावपि सर्वविषयज्ञानक्रियाशक्तिमत्त्वस्वभावमेव ऐश्वर्यं तन्मात्रानुबन्धित्वादेवसिद्धम् ·· । Bhāskarī, I. p. 68,
2. श्रीमत्परमशिवस्य पुन: विश्वोत्तीर्णं-विश्वात्मक-परमानन्दमय-प्रकाशैकघनस्य एवंविधमेव शिवादि-धरण्यन्तम् अखिलम् अभेदेनैव स्फुरति; न तु वस्तुत: अन्यत् किंचित् ग्राह्यं ग्राहकं वा; अपितु श्री परमशिवभट्टारक एव इत्थं नानावैचित्र्यसहस्त्रै: स्फुरति । PH. p. 42.
3. P. S. Kārikā 34.

Hemalekha, 'every moment is a moment of pure consciousness or objectlessness. If this is not so, then it is non-existent as the hare's horn'.[1] Objectless samādhi, deep sleep and the consciousness of objects, are ultimately the same from the point of view of pure consciousness. So it stands that samādhi is present in sleep as well as in waking states. But this is not to be called the main samādhi.[2] In all the conditions of the finite soul, waking, dreaming, deep sleep and the Fourth, the Self appears determined as subject and object. Nothing is separate from Him. For, consciousness is present throughout these states.[3]

All these states might be called the different stations of the Lord.[4] The waking is called *Viśva*, or the *Viraj* form of Brahman, because of differentiation. The dreaming state is called *Tejas*, i.e. the Tejas form of Brahman, because of the greatness of light. The deep sleep is called *Prajñā* or understanding, i.e. the prajñā form of Brahman. In it the universe as a complex of subject and object is dissolved and a great void reigns. It is a state of pure potentiality (*saṁskāra bhūmi*) out of which emerges the vision of the universe having the qualities 'blue' and 'pleasure' etc. It is a compact of knowledge like the Fourth state. Though essentially a state of light, its brilliance is darkened by the potentialities remaining from the dissolved universe. But this is not so with the Fourth, which consists of pure consciousness and is the highest state. All the influences of the finite existence having vanished from the Self, it is now a state of absolute bliss and consciousness in which the three

1. Tripurā Rahasya, p. 103.
2. Ibid. pp. 100-1,
3. PS. Kārikā 26.
4. 'As the Self, God has four stations. In the state of wakefulness it is aware of all gross and external things. In that of dream, it is conscious of all subtle internal things—the Ideas which are the prototypes of all manifested objects of the world, its third state is a massed consciousness where there is no distinction, here it is the Lord and master of all, and in the Fourth state, the Self is transcendent, immeasurable.'—Basu, A., *Tad Ekam: That One; Durham University Journal*, March, 1967, p. 60.

previous states are merged.[1] In the case of the finite self, it is the objectivity of the transmigratory beings, in which the subjectivity (ahaṁtā) is merged, that shines, The transmigratory state, which consists of waking, dreaming and deep sleep, is nothing but this state of objectivity (idaṁtā) in which the subjectivity is merged. But that state-in which all, from śūnya to body etc., are converted (into self) by self-consciousness, which has the consciousness of possession of the above described glory of omnipotence and eternity etc., as a metal is converted into gold by the alchemic process,—is called the Fourth or *Turīya*. In this state, body etc. give up, as if it were, their objective nature.[2] The Turīya is an aspect of the manifestation of the Supreme Power and is the source of all the three functions etc.[3] The Fifth state, the *Turīyātīta* is the condition beyond the Fourth. It is like the ocean without ruffles. It is the state in which free consciousness or self-consciousness shines, because of the instruction of a teacher or any other similar reason, in its full freedom and there is full cosciousness of the qualities of omnipotence, omnipresence etc.[4] The Fourth and the Fifth constitute the state of liberation and are known as *samāveśa* in the Scriptures.[5] They are in fact the states of Parama Śiva.[6]

Ahaṁtā shines in all these states. It is known to all persons through self-experience both in waking and dreaming. Though self-consciousness does not appear to shine in the state of deep sleep, yet there too it shines. Because, otherwise subsequent remembrance would not be possible. If ahaṁtā itself were annulled, nothing could be known.[7] In reality, the fact is that ahaṁtā shines in deep sleep as

1. तुरीयं ग्राह्य-ग्राहक-क्षोभप्रलयसंस्कारपरिक्षयात् ज्ञानघनप्रकाशानन्द मूर्ति···। PS., p. 80.
2. IPV. III. ii. 12.
3. SSV. Sutra 38.
4. IPV. III. ii. 12.
5. Ibid. III. ii. 11.
6. Ibid. III. ii. 19-20.
7. यदि हि स्वयं निवर्तेत तज्जाग्रदादयपि तत्प्रकाशबिनाकृतं न किंचित् प्रकाशेत । SN. I. 3.

its luminosity is eternal, and also because there is nothing to limit it. Moreover, it also shines to the other subjects at that time.[1]

The manifestation of these various states cannot be regarded as different from the absolute Saṁvid. For, if it were so, the latter would be subject to modifications because of the manifestation of the states. In fact, nothing would be illumined. Hence it has to be admitted that 'He is verily Śaṅkara who thus observes and investigates His own nature, although taking His stand in such states as the waking, etc.'[2] Through the manifestation of these states, the Absolute realises His own nature.

As regards the question whether these different states do not really cover the essential nature of Reality, the Śaiva Absolutist holds that the Lord is not really covered or concealed by the manifestation of these states. Both the forms of universal creation etc. and the states of experience of the individual subject, such as waking etc., shine in the Fourth, or the state of the form of Supreme Egoity, which is absolute and infinite bliss. That which does not shine on the background of the Lord can never shine anywhere else. Hence in all states the Lord exists in unity, in the form of Turīya. This is the ultimate Truth.[3]

The three states, waking, dreaming and deep sleep, have to be given up because of the predominance of Prāṇa and subordinate position of freedom in them. There is pleasure

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1. सुषुप्तमपि प्रति प्रकाशत एव, अन्यथा स्मृत्ययोगात्; प्रकाशस्य च नित्यत्वात् विच्छेदहेतोरभावेन, अन्यप्रमात्रपेक्षया च प्रकाशमानत्वात् "। IPV. I. i. 1.
2. SN. I. 3.
3. विश्वापेक्षया ये सर्गादयो, मायाप्रमातृगताश्च ये जाग्रदादयोऽवस्थाविशेषा:, ते उभयथा एतस्मिन् भगवति आनन्दघने 'तुरीयेधामनि' चतुर्थे पूर्णाहन्तामये पदे 'भान्ति' तद्विश्रान्ता: सन्त: स्वरूपसत्तां कल्पितप्रमात्रपेक्षया बाह्यतया लभन्ते। परमेश्वरभित्तौ यत् न प्रकाशते तत् बाह्यतयापि न प्रकाशते, अत: 'त्रिशु चतुर्थं तैलवदासेच्यम्' इति सर्वासु अवस्थासु तुरीयं रूपम् अनुस्यूतत्वेन स्थितम्,—इति परमार्थ: । PS. pp. 74-81.

and pain in them according as the predominance of the power of freedom increases or decreases. Therefore, the states of Turīya, in which there is the predominance of freedom, and Turīyātīta, in which there is its continuity, are to be coveted.[1] In the states of both waking and dreaming, the principle of life (Prāṇa) manifests itself primarily in inhaling and exhaling. In the state of deep sleep it is called *samāna*, the most essential feature of which is the rest of Prāṇa. In the state of Turīya, it moves up through the *Suṣumnā*, the central nerve, and as such it is called *Udāna*. Here the dissolution of the physical world begins. The souls from Vijñānākala to Sadāśiva are in this state. The Turīyātīta, which is the state of Parama Śiva, is characterised by the working of *Vyāna*. Thus, the individual subject who is nothing more than the principle of life (*Prāṇarūpa*), assumes the form of Prāṇa, apāna, udāna, samāna and vyāna. Although in the states of Turīya and Turīyātīta the principle of life is present, because otherwise there would be no rise of it from them, yet, because there is dissolution of duality during these states which are characterised by rest on unity, therefore, there is no variety of pleasure and pain in them. They are nothing more than the highest Bliss which is characterised by perfect rest on the Self.[2]

Thus deep sleep consists in the rest of self-consciousness in *Śūnya* or *Prāṇa* and is like the state of disillusionment. It is of two kinds : that in which objective consciousness persists and that in which there is no objective consciousness. In the former the self has the impurity of Māyā, but in the latter it is free from it. The absence of objective knowledge characterises the *Śūnya Pramātā*, who is nothing more than not-being of *Buddhi* etc., and who experiences subjectivity as 'I,' which is related only to the vague and absolutely formless residual trace. In the Śūnya resides the power which sets vital air etc. in motion and is the internal

1. IPV. III. ii. 18.
2. Ibid. III 20.

activity of the senses. This power is called life (*jīvana*). Another view of life is that it is nothing but self-consciousness identified with Prāṇa which is identical with the *Puryaṣṭakas*.[1]

Because of the power of freedom there arises a state in which the essential nature of consciousness is obscured. In this state there is no other consciousness left except that of nothing. Its object is the residual trace of previous existence. Thus, the Śūnya is so called because it is essentially nothing else than not-being of all and the essential nature of not-being consists in existing nowhere than in the residual trace. This is the only way in which the objects can be said to be non-existing in any context, for they are never totally destroyed. In this very Śūnya subject there is a power which is responsible for the working of the Prāṇa, Apāna etc. and this is nothing but the inner working of the senses. Thus, self-consciousness, resting on Śūnya and associated with the senses, is life. Therefore, Śūnva is the transmigratory soul (Jīva). In other words, if self-consciousness be resting on that power which is responsible for the working of Prāṇa etc. and is called Prāṇa, then Prāṇa itself is Jīva and the same is Śūnya. When self-consciousness rests on *Puryaṣṭaka* it is described as *Suṣupta*. The subject falls asleep because of impurity, but does not have deep sleep because of Kalā. When Kalā gets merged in sleep, the subject is in deep sleep (Suṣupta). Such state and the act therein is Sauṣupta. It is of two kinds, *savedya* and *apavedya*. In the case of the Sauṣupta of Śūnya, there is no separate object of knowledge; hence, because of the absence of the impurity of Māyā, it is called apavedya, without object. But in the case of Sauṣupta of Prāṇa, there being the experience of pleasure and pain, because of the

1. Five vital airs, group of senses of perception, group of organs of action, and that which is responsible for the rise of certain knowledge—are called Puryaṣṭaka. Others hold the five Tanmatras manas, buddhi, and ahamkāra to be the Puryaṣṭaka IPV. III. II. 15-17.

Māyīya Mala, the object is present. Hence it is called savedya. *Pralaya* also has to be assumed to be of two kinds, deep and not deep. But Pralaya is due to destruction of body etc. and is therefore of longer duration than Suṣupta which is due to the absence of attention. While sleep is due to fatigue and fainting is due to something being wrong in the body, *Samādhi* is due to the free will of the self. During the state of dreaming the objects, though only mental, are so created that they shine as external objects. In the waking state, the objects are common to all subjects and have stability and externality. The dreams are created by the Lord. They are not the creation of the individual, because he sees the undesired. Even when the desired is seen, it is found connected with different times and places. Wherein the objects are perceived by external senses and have uncontradicted continuity,. Such a creation in relation to the limited subject is technically called wakeful state. It lasts only so long as there is continuity of certainty in regard to the existence of external objects. But when the continuity of the consciousness of certainty is broken in the middle, then that is dream state. In a long dream, the shorter dream that comes within is *jāgar* as compared to the long dream. And similarly, what is considered to be *jāgar*, there being a break in the continuity of consciousness of its certainty at another time, is simply a dream as compared to another *jāgar*[1].

Although the Śaivite and the Vedāntin both employ similar terms for describing the four states of experience, yet they hold essentially different views about the nature of the Self.[2] For the Vedāntin, the self is purely cognitive and not active. It is only the empirical self which may be described as the agent.[3] An analysis of our experience comprising the waking and other states shows that pure consciousness alone is the essence of the Self. While the Self persists all alone, the objects of the world vary. This proves that the Self is

1. IPV III. ii. 13-17.
2. PS P. 76.
3. SB. II. iii. 40, 1. i. 4

different from the objects. The consciousness of the external objects constitutes the main characteristic of the waking state. But this ceases in the state of dream. In deep sleep even the internal differences in consciousness are dissolved. However, pure consciousness remains the persistent factor in all these states. The pure self alone is revealed in the state of deep sleep where the self is directly aware of itself. In all the three states, pure consciousness alone is the continuing factor. Through these states, the self gradually or successively frees itself from all that is not-self. This freedom of the self is revealed completely in the Fourth state wherein there is no trace of objectivity. The Fourth state is not merely a state among states, it is the truth of all other states.[1]

Explaining the limitation of the self on the analogy of reflection of the sun in water, or the division of space into different particular spaces through the jars etc. (*Pratibimbavāda* and *Avacchedavāda*), the Vedāntin asserts the purity and unity of consciousness. Just as the same space is conceived to be all-pervasive and yet conventionally divided into the space of pot, room, and so on, similarly, the Ātman, though one and all-pervasive, is supposed through ignorance to be limited and divided into different subjects and objects. Accordingly, the individual soul has to be regarded as a mere appearance of the absolute Self. Just as when one reflected image of the sun trembles, another reflected image does not on that account tremble also, so when one soul is connected with actions and their results, another soul is not on that account connected likewise.[2] Ultimately, the identity between the self and the individual soul is real, the difference between them is only phenomenal. That is why the difference between God and Jīva does not oppose their ultimate identity.[3] The self, apart from the limiting adjuncts, is nothing but the absolute. Just as the space within the jars etc. is really identical with the universal space, so the

1. Bhattacharya, K. C., *Studies in Vedāntism*, pp. 15-17.
2. SB II. iii. 50.
3. Rai Chaudhuri, opp. cit. ·p. 148.

souls are essentially one with the Ātman.[1] As long as the soul does not free itself from'nescience' in the form of duality—which nescience may be compared to the mistake of him who in the twilight mistakes a post for a man—and does not rise to the real knowledge of self, so long it remains the finite individual soul.[2] Just as the ignorant ascribes blue colour to the colourless ether, the opposite characteristics of the individual soul are erroneously ascribed to the self.[3]

The soul is affected with definite attributes only so long as nescience remains. As soon as nescience is destroyed, the soul is one with the Self, as is taught by the Scripture—'Thou art that'.[4] Therefore, the Vedāntins admit that the difference is due to the limiting adjuncts which are the product of name and form as presented by nescience.[5] Ultimate release is possible only if the distinction is regarded as due to adjuncts only. It is nescience which makes them appear as different, just as rope appears as snake due to ignorance. The relation between Ātman and Jīva is analogous to that of the snake and coils. Viewed as a whole, the snake is one; the element of difference appears if we view it with regard to its coils, hood, erect, posture and so on.[6] Like light and sun, self and jīva are spoken of as different, though really non-differnt Scriptures do not teach their identity in a positive sense. In fact, there is no such thing as the individual soul absolutely different from the Ātman. But Brahman is called the individual, the agent and enjoyer, due to the limiting adjuncts.[7] The *Ekajīvavādins* hold that there is only one Jīva, while *Anekajīvavādins* hold Jīvas to be many[8].

1. S. B. I. iii. 7
2. Ibid, (Thibaut) I. p. 281.
3. Ibid. I. iii. 81
4. Ibid. I. iv. 6
5. Ibid. I, p. 281.
6. Ibid. I. iv. 6; III. ii. 25, 29; III. ii. 27.
7. Ibid. IV. i. 3; I. i. 31
8. S. L. S. II. p. 28

CHAPTER TEN

BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

'We bow to that Siva who, having manifested the diversity of the universe as the prima facie view, leads it up to unity, the real view'.[1]

1. Bondage

The absolutistic systems face great difficulty in explaining the phenomenon of bondage. The question as to how does the infinite subject appear as the finite is generally raised against absolutism. And even if bondage is regarded as unreal, the problem remains as to how can the unreal appear as real. Either bondage is real, or it is unreal. In the former case, it has to be explained how the absolute can really become limited and, above all, how can a real bondage be destroyed. But if bondage is unreal, the question arises : how and why does the unreal appear ? The individual need not undergo so many hardships and sufferings to remove the bondage which is unreal.

The problem assumes greater dimensions in those absolutisms where in bondage is regarded as a manifestation of the free will of absolute. Two serious difficulties arise particularly on the view that bondage is a self-willed process. First of all, there would be no need even to discuss or consider the problem of release, if bondage is due to the divine free will. The entire concept of spiritual discipline could have no significance on this view. Secondly, as a consequence of this, there would be no ground left for distinguishing between bondage and freedom. Freedom, on this view, would have no more value than bondage. Nor would there be any

1. पूर्वपक्षतया येन विश्वमाभास्य भेदत: ।
अभेदोत्तरपक्षान्तं नीयते तं स्तुम: शिवम् ॥ IPV. I. ii. Intr.

reason either for avoiding limitation or for choosing freedom.

In anticipation of such objections, Abhinava Gupta himself first raises the question: if the one highest Lord alone is the Self, what then is bondage for freedom from which attempt is to be made ? Who is there other than the Lord to be in bondage ?[1] While answering such questions, he asserts that although from the absolute point of view there is no bondage[2], yet, when the Subject due to his all-transcending power of freedom manifests himself as limited, he forgets his own perfection and becomes bound. But even in the state of apparent limitation, he remains pure and perfect. This is the reason why he is called Puruṣa. For, Puruṣa is essentially nothing more than the ignorance of being perfect. Because of the limitation owing to the association with different bodies, vital airs etc. there appear to be many Puruṣas. The Puruṣa is enjoyer of the fruits of the deeds performed by him and, therefore, he is in bondage. When the self, which is essentially absolute consciousness and bliss, assumes the form of Puruṣa it becomes qualified by three guṇas, which are the limited manifestation of his abolute power. Enjoyment or *bhoga* is nothing but limited action and bliss. Limited action is suffering, because *rajas* which is a mixture of knowledge and ignorance characterised by motion is pain; *sattva*, which is essentially the light of knowledge is pleasure; *tamas* is complete ignorance and is the rest between the two, like the state of *pralaya*. Thus the same self-identical powers of knowledge and action of the Lord together with Māyā are spoken of as the three *guṇas* of

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1. ननु यद्येक एवायं महेश्वररूप आत्मा कस्तर्हि बन्धो यदत्रमोचनायायमुद्यम: ? ···तथापि कस्य वन्ध: ? ईश्वर व्यतिरिक्तो हि कोऽन्योऽस्ति ?
Ibid. IV, i. 2-3, Bhaskari II pp. 2-3 283.

2. सत्यम्, परमार्थतो न कश्चिद् बन्ध: केवलं स्वस्मादनुत्तरात् स्वातन्त्र्यात्- यदा स्वात्मानं संकुचितमवभासयति स एव, तदा स्वस्य पूर्णस्य रूपस्य यदपरिज्ञानं भासमानत्वेऽप्यपरामर्शरूपं तदेव कारणत्वेन प्रकृतं यस्य स पूर्णत्वाख्यातिमात्रतत्त्व: 'पुरुष:' इत्युच्यते ।
Ibid. vol. II. p. 280, SN. I. 5.

2. IPV. IV. i. 3-4.

the individual.[2] All consciousness and freedom that is in the universe is identical with the Lord who Himself is the universe. Consciousness and freedom are the powers of knowledge and action respectively. Māyā is the Lord's power which is responsible for the consciousness 'I am this.' These three powers are recognised to be natural in the self. But when there is the ignorance of the essential nature of the self and cognition and action refer to objects which are recognised to be separate and devoid of Prakāśa and Vimarśa, there arise sattva, rajas and tamas, which are characterised by pleasure, pain and delusion, and the functions of which are knowledge, action and restriction.[1] While the Lord has the power of being (*sat*), self-consciusness and action (*kriyā*), the limited subject has both being and its negation, action and its negation.[2]

Here, it might be asked that if the limited subject is also capable of creating and if he is the Lord Himself, why is his individual creation not universal? In answer to this, the Śaivite holds that the individual would certainly be the absolute creator if he could know his own powers. Because he does not know his powers, therefore, his creation is not similar to that of the Lord. Limitation or bondage takes place when owing to his power of freedom, the self forgets its real nature. The nature of this limitation consists in the loss of freedom. Limitation pervades every subject, from Śiva to Māyā Pramātā, and is nothing but a non-manifestation of absoluteness or perfection. It is of the nature of ignorance of oneself. Ignorance is of two kinds, viz. mistaking the self to be the not-self, and the not-self to be the self.[3] It is the product of divine Śakti. 'He possesses the great power, the chief function of which is to obscure the

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. ननु यदि पशोरपि सृष्टिशक्तिरस्ति तर्हीश्वर एव ? सत्यम्, ईश्वर एवासौ। नन्वेवं साधारणत्वं कस्मात् सृष्टेर्न भवति ? भवेत् यदि स्वशक्तिं परिजानीयात्, यावता सा तस्यापरिज्ञाता परवशस्यैव सतो विकल्पक्रिया विकल्पनशक्तिरुदेति। Ibid. Bhāskarī II p. 296.

state of being the Highest Lord, which is characterised by perfect rest in His essential nature.[1]' He does not take rest even for a moment in His own real nature. Being shorn of glory, or being led and re-led into the moods of pleasure and grief by his powers, He indulges in the sport of bondage and liberation. However, even in the state of bondage He is essentially free. The jīva remains identical with Śiva even in the state of limitation. In the absence of this identi y, the manifestation of individuality could not be possible.[2]

But how can anybody deliberately fall in bondage? Or, how can one consciously forget onself? To such questions, the Śaivite reply is that it is owing to His freedom that the Lord cannot rest in his own nature. The absoluteness of Being cannot be confined to any particular state of existence. As it is His very nature to perform the fivefold functions, the question of 'how' or 'why' does not arise in His case. By His very nature, the Lord is always manifest in different forms. It is not legitimate to question the nature of a thing.[3] Limitation is a given fact. Accordingly, we have to start with the recognition of the fact of bondage. Various systems try to explain the phenomena of limitation or bondage in their own ways. In the 'knowledge' approaches, ignorance which is the cause of bondage has been regarded as beginningless. In certain 'devotional' approaches bondage has been regarded as the result of the misuse by the individual of the

1. Ibid. IV. i. 10.
2. न तु तत्वत: शिवात्मा स्वभावोऽस्य क्वापि गत:, तद्भावे हि स एव न स्फुरेत् । SN. III. 13.
3. भगवान् स्वतन्त्र: 'परमशिव:' पूर्णचिदानन्दैकघन लक्षण: स्वरूपगोपन-सतत्त्वक्रीडाशीलत्वात् अख्यात्यवभासनपूर्वं स्वात्मानमेव देहादिप्रमातृतापन्नं विधाय, स्वरूपं प्रच्छाद्य च बन्धं विदधाति; तथैव पुन: स्वेच्छात्: स्वात्मज्ञानप्रकाशक्रमेण देहादिप्रमातृताबन्धं निवार्य, स एव तं स्वात्मानं मोचयति;—इति उभयथा 'बन्धमोक्षचित्रां' संसारापवर्गस्वरूपाश्चर्यमयीं 'क्रीडां' खेलां 'प्रतनोति' विस्तारयति 'एकाकी न रमाम्यहम्' इति । स्वभाव एव एष देवस्य, यत तां तामपि अवस्थाम् आपन्न: स्वरूपरूप: । सन् सर्वत्र अनुभवितृतया प्रथते···। PS. pp. 73-4.

authority which was delegated to him by God. In the Śaiva approach, bondage is conceived as a self-limitation. Owing to its sportive nature, the absolute voluntarily accepts a limitation of self-consciousness which gives rise to limited desires. Because of these limited desires the finite self performs various finite actions and experiences their resultant fruits. Accordingly, the chain of karmas leads the individual from bondage to bondage. Thus, the real cause of bondage is self-forgetfulness—which is a spontaneous manifestation of the Divine freedom. In other words, bondage takes place when the absolute self-consciousness becomes manifest as finite or limited. With the limitation of consciousness freedom also becomes limited. The limitation which constitutes the essential nature of the finite self is called impurity or *mala*. It is represented to be of three kinds in the Āgamas, viz. *Āṇava Mala*, *Kārmamala* and *Māyīya Mala.*[1]

Though Mala is one, it has innumerable Śaktis, each of which covers one of the potencies of the self. Āṇava Mala represents the primal ignorance because of which the individual imagines himself to be imperfect.[2] Mala is itself called Āṇava and is a manifestation of divine free will.[3] Its is due to the loss of the essential nature of consciousness (bodha), and is manifest in two ways, loss of freedom (svātantrya) and loss of the power of knowledge (jñātṛtva). It does not mean a complete loss of freedom and knowledge, but merely a limitation of the Self with regard to these powers.[4] It is the mere consciousness of supposed imperfection which gives rise to individuality. Āṇava is responsible for the rise of the impurity called Karma Mala. When the power of action becomes limited, the limited power is known as Kārma Mala. The chain of Karmas is beginningless. The universal power of action becomes manifest as the finite power because of the Karma Mala.[5] It is different

1. IPV. III. ii. 4 PH. VII.
2. PH IX
3. Ibid. VII; IPV III. II. 4-11.
4. TA I. 58
5. PH IX

from Karma Saṅskāra, which is an effe ct left on the soul by the performance of various acts. It is essentially of the nature of pure desire, without any reference to objects which lead the soul to associate with the manifestations of Māyā. It depends upon the innate ignorance, both for its existence and functioning. When the power of knowledge becomes limited, it appears as Māyīya Mala. Owing to it, the universal knowledge becomes knowledge of particulars.[1] In reality all three impurities, being due to Māyā, are Māyīya.[2] The awareness 'I am lean', 'I am fat', constitutes the Māyīyā Mala, as opposed to the consciousness 'I perform sacrifice etc.', which is Kārma Mala. The entirety of tattvas from Kalā to earth, which are derived from Māyā and which produce different bodies, senses etc., constitute the Māyīya Mala. The performance of good and evil etc., which constitutes Kārma mala, is based upon the Māyīya Mala. The Māyīya Mala is different from Māyā tattva. All that the self is associated with, because of both Kārma Mala and Karma Saṅskāra, is called Māyīya Mala.[3] The Mala is associated with the individual soul differently in different states. These different states of relationship are : when the Mala is active, when it is not active and yet present, when it is not wholly present and yet there is some kind of relationship, when the soul transcends it and has no relationship with it.

Ignorance is of two kinds: loss of freedom in consciousness and loss of consciousness in freedom. In the Tāntric tradition they are known as *pauruṣa ajñāna* and *bodha ajñāna*. Ajñāna is nothig but imperfect knowledge and is a manifestation of divine freedom. While intellectual ignorance is an affection of the self caused by internal or external stimulus, spiritual ignorance is purely the consciousness of limitation and is present in the transcendental state of the limited self. It continues to exist throughout the four states of Mala,

1. Ibid.
2. IPV III. ii. 4-5
3. Pandey, K. C., op. cit. p. 311

before reaching the state of final annihilation. It is beyond internal or external sensation.

If bondage is ultimately unreal, if it is only the non-intuition of the rapture of Supreme Egoity (*purṇa ahāṁtā camatkāra akhyāti*), the question arises as to how can it produce real suffering. In answer to this the Śaivite holds that though bondage is purely mental, it gives rise to real suffering. The soul falsely imagines that the world is separate from itself, and looks for separate fruits for its works; hence it goes through the cycle of birth and death, in paradise and hell etc., experiencing these fruits.[1] Although there is no snake in the rope, the illusion causes terror which may often end in death. Certainly, the power of delusion is very great. It is by the power of delusion that merit and demerit, paradise and hell, birth and death, which really do not exist, arise in the self. As the rope which is falsely imagined to be the snake has the same deadly effect as the snake, so merit etc., which are really figments of imagination, arise in the mind of those who confound the body with the self under the illusory influence of Māyā and undergo endless sufferings in the cycle of bodily birth and death.[2] It is darkness from darkness when the not-self is imagined to be the self. It is a mistake to imagine that the modes of being which are constituted by the self are other than the self and absolutely inanimate. But it is the worst of errors to single out from these an inanimate object, such as the body, the breath etc., and to regard it as the one and the only self by forming such conceptions as 'I am lean', 'I am hungry', when in truth it is only the body that is hungry, not the subject of such thought.[3]

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1 PS. Karika 25-30

2. एवं यथा रज्जु परमार्थसती भ्रान्त्या सर्पतया विमृष्टापि सर्पगताम् अर्थक्रियां करोति, तथैव देहात्ममानिनां चेतसि 'धर्मादि असदपि' तत्त्वतः अविद्यमानं, 'विभ्रम्'वशात् मायाव्यामोहसामर्थ्यात् एव 'भवति' 'एतदेव तत्त्वम्' इति भ्रान्त्या सत्तां लभते ।''' Ibid. p. 64.

3. इति सर्वं कल्पनामात्र सारं विभ्रमविजृम्भितमेव मायाशक्त्या देहाद्यात्मतया अभिमन्यते । Ibid. Karikā 31.

The absolute being neither the doer nor the knower, ultimately there can be no self-willed bondage according to the Vedānta. If the cause of bondage constitutes the essential nature of Brahman, if it is natural to him, there would be no possibility either of freedom or of release, Final release is possible only if the bondage is due to nescience which is destructible. If the soul is really and truly bound—whether the soul be considered as a certain condition or a state of the highest Self—its real bondage cannot be done away with, and thus the scriptural doctrine of final release becomes absurd.[1] The deeper implications of spiritual life, therefore, necessitate the doctrine of nescience or Māyā.[2] Moreover, if the cause of suffering and the sufferer constitute one self, then also there can be no final release. The cause of suffering and the sufferer cannot be related to each other as cause and effect, as they are one. If fire, which possesses different attributes, such as heat and light, and is capable of change, does neither burn nor illumine itself, since it is one only, how can the one and unchanging Brahman enter with reference to itself into the relation of cause of suffering and sufferer ?[3]

In reply to the question as to how Brahman which is pure consciousness can appear as its opposite, the Vedāntin holds that no contradiction is involved in holding the view that Brahman appears as bound. In fact, it is only the *Caitanya* which can be regarded as ignorant; the insentient cannot be regarded as ignorant. The Vedāntin is not interested in showing the origin of ignorance. According to him, there can be no conscious fall into ignorance or bondage. Ignorance is ultimately false; it is inexplicable. In reality, nescience does

1. SB. III. ii. 29.

2. 'Spiritual life is a realisation or a rediscovery of oneself and not a new acquisition. Otherwise it would be transitory and be subject to degrees. There is thus an element of negation or transcendence in all spiritual life. And yet this negation cannot be deemed to be a real or integral feature of ultimate reality. It is a fact and not a reality. Śankara's theory of Māyā is the best expression of this spiritual predicament.' -Murti, T. R. V., Foreword to *The Integral* Advaitism *of Shri Aurobindo* by R. S. Misra.

3. SB II. ii. 10

not make any difference in the nature of the thing itself. The case of the individual soul is similar to the rope-snake. Though the individual soul is in reality one with the highest Self, nescience makes it appear as different.[1]

The Jīva is a complex of subject and object. Ignorance causes the sense of individuality, the distinctive character of which is its connection with *buddhi* or intelligence, which endures as long as the state of Saṁsāra is not terminated by perfect knowledge,[2] Soul's connetion with buddhi is potential during waking and rebirth. The assumption of such a potential connection is necessary, otherwise the law of causation cannot be maintained.[3] It is only the Jīva who undergoes the ordeals of trials and suffering. The Self is free from these.[4] The Jīva is all-pervading (*Vibhu*) and not atomic (*aṇu*), otherwise it could not experience sensation extending over the whole body.[5] The limiting adjuncts supply individuality to the different souls. On account of these adjuncts, the souls are different and there is no confusion of actions or fruits of actions.[6] When the adjunct are produced or dissolved. the indlvidual soul is said to be produced or dissolved.

2. Liberation

All spiritual disciplines begin with the assumption of bondage and aim at the realization of ultimate release. But serious difficulties arise in those systems wherein it is held that bondage is nothing but self-willed limitation of the absolute. If bondage is regarded as a manifestation of the divine free will, how and why should the finite individual strive for freedom? If bondage is a spontaneous manifestation of divine nature, if it is His *Lilā*, how can the individual have any urge to transcend it? In reply to such questions, the Śaiva absolutist asserts that though the phenomenal existence is a manifestation of the Divine nature, it has to be avoided because it is a state of limitation or imperfection. The three

1. Ibid. I. iv. 6.
2. Ibid. II. ii. 20.
3. Ibid. I. iii. 31
4. SB I, iii. 19
5. Ibid II. iii. 39
6. Ibid. III, ii. 9;II. iii. 49

states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep, comprising the whole of phenomenal life are painful and consititute the level of toil and suffering. During these states Prāṇa etc. become predominant and freedom is reduced to a subordinate position. Turīya and Turīyātīta, which constitute the state of liberation, are to be striven after as there is the predominance of freedom in them. After the realisation of this state which is also one's essential nature and is absolute bliss, there is an end to one's sufferings.[1]

As regards the objection that if the process of self-concealment and self-revelation forms a part of Divine nature, then bondage and liberation would become automatic and the individual would have no freedom or initiative, the Śaivite holds that these functions (*tirodhāna* and *anugraha*) operate only at the level of the absolute. The will and thought of the individual work only at the lower level, or within the realm of creation. Moreover, the process of bondage and liberation is not automatic in the sense of being mechanical. For, it is due to His free will that He ceaselessly carries on the miraculous sport of limitation and freedom.[2] It is owing to His free will that He first assumes the state of limitation through ignorance and then resumes perfection through knowledge.[3] The Supreme Śiva, solely composed of infinite consciousness and bliss, carries on the sport, in which He conceals His own nature by converting it into diverse subjects of finite thought so as to imprison it and again, of his own free will, realise it. It is His nature that He cannot rest alone and constantly passes from one condition to another without losing His self-identity.[4]

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1. हेया त्रयीयं प्राणादेः प्राधान्यात्कर्तृतागुणे ।
तद्ग्लानोपचयप्रायसुखदुःखादयोगतः ॥ IPV. III. ii. 18.
2. PH. IX-XII.
3. PS. p. 73.
4. स्वज्ञानविभवभासन—
योगेनोद्वेष्टयेन्निजात्मानम् ।
इति बन्धमोक्षचित्रां
क्रीडां प्रतनोति परमशिवः ॥ Idid, Kārikā 33.

The question further arises that if everything is done by Śiva, where is the scope for individual efforts or Karmas ? On this view the distinction between good and evil, right and wrong, would no longer exist and moral responsibility would be meaningless. If the Lord Himself is the Creator in all cases, the potter would cease to be the creator of jar etc. As no agency or causality can be attributed to the individual, the line of demarcation between merit and demerit will disappear.[1] But such objections are baseless according to the Śaivite. For, according to him the ascription of agency or causality by the individual to himself is the root cause of bondage or suffering. Once the individual realises that it is not he but the absolute who is the real agent, he ceases to be responsible for good or evil. The individual is, however, responsible as long as there exists the sense of finitude or egoity in him. In so far as there is the lack of realisation of one's identity with Śiva, one has to obey the laws of morality. Though in reality there is no bondage, the individual is in bondage as long as there exists the feeling of limitation in him. However, if, one does not feel bound, there is no real problem for him. But so long as there is egoity and identity with the body etc. one is in the realm of limitation and has to undergo trials and sufferings. In fact, such suffering is essential for any spritual awakening. The individual who enjoys the state of bondage and is unable to discriminate between limitation and freedom is a deeply bound soul, a *paśu*. In fact there never has been any veiling or covering anywhere in reality, No one has ever been in bondage. 'Please show me where such a bondage can be. Besides these two false beliefs that there is such a thing as bondage and there is such a thing as mind, there is no other bondage for any one anywhere.'[2]

But if there is no real bondage or liberation, what then does realisation mean ? In reply to this, the Śaivite holds

1. नन्वेवं कुम्भकृतो नास्ति कर्तृत्वम्,-इति समुत्सीदेत धर्माधर्मव्यवस्था। IPV. II. IV. 9,
2. Tripurārahasya, p. 120.

that the realisation of the Self is nothing but bringing to notice the powers of the Self which, though known, is not fully realised. For, its powers are obscured by ignorance.[1] The power of the Lord partly obscures the Self which is ever self-luminous. Therefore, the Self is not realised in all its aspects and consequently, it has no causal efficiency, such as when it is fully realised. Hence, in order to arouse the consciousness of perfection of Self, the way of recognition is important.[2] The act of bringing about the recognition of the Lord is not the act of causal agent, nor that of one who makes things known. It is simply the removal of the ignorance. The ignorance and its removal both are simply manifestations of the Lord and nothing more.[3] Suppose one who has no eye for the worth of jewels goes to a treasury full of jewels. In spite of seeing all of them, he would be unable to distinguish between one jewel and another because of ignorance. Similarly, the individual who is ignorant of the true nature of Self cannot realise it. Māyā or ignorance which is the root cause of world appearance, will be dispelled only if one has realised the Self even though he may still be conscious of body and other objects; this constitutes liberation. Liberation is neither on earth nor in the underworld, nor somewhere in heaven. It is whatever one realises when one has transcended the activity of thought.[4]

From the highest point of view, there is no difference between bondage and release in absolutism. Nirvāna is Saṁsāra, Saṁsāra is nirvāṇa. For, Brahman is *all* this. This has

1. IPV. I; i. 2.
2. सैव भगवतो माया विमोहिनी नाम शक्तिः, तद्वशात् प्रकाशात्मतया सततम् अवभासमानेऽपि आत्मनि भागेन अप्रकाशनवशाद् 'अनुपलक्षिते' सर्वथा हृदयंगमीभावप्राप्ते अत एव पूर्णतावभासनसाध्याम् अर्थक्रियाम् अकुर्वति तत्पूर्णतावभासनात्मकाभिमानविशेषसिद्धये 'प्रत्यभिज्ञा' व्याख्यतद्वर्वा प्रदर्श्यंते,...। Ibid,
3. न कारक व्यापारो भगवति, नापि ज्ञापकव्यापारोऽयम् अपि तु मोहापसारणमात्रमेतत्, व्यवहारसाधनानां प्रमाणानां तावत्येव विश्रान्तेः ...। यश्चायं मोहस्तदपसारणं च यत्, तदुभयमपि भगवत एव विजृम्भामात्रम् न तु अधिकं किंचित् ...। Ibid. Bhāskarī, vol. I. pp. 58-59
4. Tripurārahasya, pp. 105-12.

been emphatically asserted in the āgamic tradition, where there is no fundamental difference between *Bhoga* and *Mokśa*, wordly enjoyment and spiritual release.[1] For, *Bhoga* is nothing else than limited action and bliss. It constitutes suffering owing to its being limited and imperfect.[2]

Liberation is nothing but the revelation of the powers of Self when the bond of ignorance is burst.[3] No change is introduced in the nature of reality by the manifestation of either bondage or release. When the bond of ignorance, i.e., the illusion that the real Self is not self and that the body etc. are Self, is destroyed by knowledge, the Self is revealed in its supreme native powers, as omnipresence etc. Release is thus the attainment of the original, innate absolute and pure self-consciousness. It is the awareness of one's true nature.

Here the objection might be raised that if the individual is really identical with the absolute, how can recognition or non-recognition of this fact affect the causal efficiency of of the individual ? Does the recognition of a seed as such, or the absence therof, affect its caual efficiency to sprout ? To this the reply is that causal efficiency is of two kinds : external, e. g. the sprouting of a seed, which does not affect the mind, and internal, such as the causal efficiency to give delight, which does affect the mind. While the recognition

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1. Kaviraj, G., *Introduction to Pratyabhjñā Philosophy, in Alaka.*
2. IPV. IV. i. 3.
3. मोक्षस्य नैव किंचिद्

धामास्ति न चापि गमनमन्यत्र ।

अज्ञानग्रन्थिभिदा

स्वशक्त्यभिव्यक्तता मोक्षः ॥ PS. Kārikā 60

केवलमिति न तु किंचिदपूर्वं क्रियते, नापि तत्त्वतोऽप्रकाशमानं प्रकाश्यते, प्रकाशमान एव यत् 'न प्रकाशते इत्यभिमननं तदपसार्यते । तदपसरणमेव हि परमेश्वरतालाभो मुक्तिः, तदनपसरणमेव संसारः, अभिमननमात्रसारं हि एतद्द्वयम्, उभयमपि चेदं भगवद्विजृम्भितमेव । IPV. II. III. 17. Bhāskarī II. pp. 143-4.

or non-recognition does not have any effect in the former case, it does affect the internal efficiency. The former does not pre-suppose recognition, but the latter does. Though the individual is really identical with absolute, he does not get happiness from this identity unless he is conscious of it. Only when the identity of Jīva and Ātman is pointed out, as in the statement *'tat tvam asi,'* does one realise one's splendour. The function of revelation is only to point out this identity, and not to make any change in Reality.[1]

The knowledge of the identity between Jīva and Śiva, which has been proclaimed in the Scriptures, constitutes liberation, lack of this knowledge constitutes bondage.[2] When one realises that everything is of the nature of Śiva, one becomes free. In other words, when it is recognised that Śiva is one only, that he consists of thirty-five categories, that His nature appears in a heptad of knowing subject, and His character in a pentad of powers, then He bestows salvation. Otherwise, He leads to Saṁsāra.[3] Recognition of the authorship of five-fold act leads to release, absence of it to bondage.[4] *Vāmeśvarī* and other goddesses are able to bring about both, liberation and bondage, through knowledge the one, through lack of it the other.[5] When there is full knowledge of the authorship of the fivefold process the delusion by one's own Śaktis ceases because the source

1. IPV. II. III. 17.
2. एतत्तत्त्वपरिज्ञानमेव मुक्तिः, एतत्तत्त्वापरिज्ञानमेव च बन्धः ; PH. IV. अस्यैव सम्यक् स्वरूपज्ञानात् यतो मुक्तिः असम्यक् तु संसारः ''। Ibid. VI.
3. एवं च शिवैकरूपत्वेन, पञ्चत्रिंशत्तत्त्वमयत्वेन, प्रमातृसप्तकस्वभावत्वेन चिदादिशक्तिपञ्चकात्मकत्वेन च अयं प्रत्यभिज्ञायमानो मुक्तिदः ; अन्यथा तु संसारहेतुः । Ibid. VII.
4. एवमिदं पञ्चविधकृत्यकारित्वम् आत्मीयं सदा दृढप्रतिपत्त्या परिशील्यमानं माहेश्वर्यम् उन्मीलयत्येव भक्तिभाजाम् । अत एव ये सदा एतत् परिशीलयन्ति, ते स्वरूपविकासमयं विश्वं जानाना जीवन्मुक्ता-इत्याम्नाताः । ये तु न तथा, ते सर्वतो विभिन्नं मेयजातं पश्यन्तो बद्धात्मानः । PH. p. 63.
5. Ibid.

out of which ignorance grows vanishes and absoluteness is realised.[1]

The Śaivite distinguishes between *Mokśa* and *Pūrṇatva.* According to him what the other systems regard as release is in reality merely a state of pure being (*Kaivalya*) and not the highest state of release. When, either through discrimination or through some other method, the bond of *Karma* is broken and transmigration stops, the individual soul transcends the sphere of Māyā and attains purity. This is only the transitional state of release. Final release consists in the realisation of absolute freedom or perfection.[2] The mere dissolution of Karma and attainment of purity does not constitute real freedom. The attainment of freedom is possible only when one transcends the realm of Māyā. The state of purity, advocated by the Sāṁkhya, the Vedāntin, the Buddhist, the Jainas and others, is in reality a state wherein innate ignorance still exists. Hence this state of liberation is only partial and incomplete. It is an illusory release.[3] There can be no possibility of final release without the realisation of absolute freedom. The Vedāntin stops at the level of Māyā, the Buddhist at the Buddhi Tattva, the Sāṁkhya at the Puruṣa Tattva, and the followers of Patañjali at the Niyati Tattva.[4] Thus, by the will of the Lord those persons having limited vision are caused to arrogate to themselves a view of their own in parties and sectarian schools. So, unless the highest Śakti descends upon them, they do not comprehend the great pervasion of the Ātman. Māyā indeed misleads them in bondage, utilizing just their craving for liberation.[5] The Śaivite in a way propounds the theory of *Svadharma*, own morality, and emphasizes that each individual has his unique spiritual status. It would be illogical to impose the aim of self-realisation upon those members of the society who belong to a

1. Ibid.
2. TA. I. 119.
3. Ibid. I. iv. 21-35.
   IPV. I. i. Introduction.
4. TA. I. 69-70.
5. PH. IX

different stage of realisation or those who are not yet weary of self-assertion.[1] Of the three prominent types of men, the lowest type is of those who belong to the mob or the herd. They are the Paśūs (the slaves of Nietzsche) who are occupied with the thought of 'I' and 'Mine'.[2]

Just as a foul mirror presents a distorted reflection and a clean mirror a true image, the mirror of intelligence when cleansed and illumined by Śiva's power of grace reveals the true nature of the Self as possessing absolute freedom and perfection. Those who are thus enlightened attain release and enjoy miraculous powers. But in other souls, their intelligence being darkened by the three impurities, because the Lord's obscuration power lies on them, the radiance of the Self, though present, is imperceptible. Being thus bound to the embodied life, they are called the herd (*paśu*).[3]

True knowledge, which is the most essential characteristic of release, consists of equal predominance of consciousness and freedom (bodha and svātantrya). Release consists in the recognition that the Self is all this universe. Such recognition causes the power of knowledge and action in the liberated souls who realise that the universe consists in the unfolding of their own real nature.[4] When he looks upon the objects as non-different from himself, the individual himself is called the Lord (*Pati*). But when he regards them as different from himself, he is the Paśu and is defiled by miseries and impurities.[5] The individual, who has realised his identity with the universe and knows that all that is manifest is simply his own glory is the highest Lord even when determinate thoughts (*vikalpa*) arise in him.[6]

1. Coomaraswamy, opp. cit. pp. 30-31.
2. Ibid.
3. PH IX.
4. Ibid. X,
5. IPV III ii. 2.
6. सर्वो ममाय विभव इत्येवं परिजानतः ।
विश्वात्मनो विकल्पानां प्रसरेऽपि महेशता ॥ Ibid. IV. i. 12.

Though the Śaivite and the Vedāntin both admit that liberation consists in true knowledge, they hold different views regarding the true nature of this knowledge. According to the Śaivite, the knowledge which leads to (or constitutes) liberation is essentially of the nature of recognition of the oneness of the individual and the universe. The Vedāntin, however, holds that true knowledge consists in the realisation of the pure Self and the consciousness of the falsity of the world. According to him, before the attainment of knowledge of the unity of the Self, the whole course of life, real and unreal, secular and religious, remains intact. But once the Pramāṇa has brought home the final truth of the unity of the Self, the entire course of the world based on distinctions is sublated and there is no more opportunity for imagining the element of purity.[1] That the attainment of Brahman is figurative is evident from such statements as 'being already released he is released.'[2] That is the state of liberation which is real in the absolute sense, immutable, eternal, all penetrating like *ākāśa*, exempt from all change, all-satisfying, undivided, whose nature is to be its own light, in which neither good nor evil, nor effect, nor past, present and future, have any place.[3]

In the Vedānta view, the final release cannot be characterised as Pūrṇatva. For, release consists essentially in being 'free from' the principle of bondage Release cannot be regarded as ultimate, if the cause of bondage be present even in the state of release. It has to be admitted that the world of experience, with its distinction of souls, objects and Īśvara, disappears for him who recognizes the oneness of Brahman and the self.[4] Just as the rope-snake disappears at the perception of the rope, or as the dream world

1. SB. II. i. 14.
2. Katha. Up. V. 1.
3. इदमत्र तु पारमार्थिकम्, कूटस्थम्, नित्यम्, व्योमवत सर्वव्यापी, सर्वविक्रियारहितम्, नित्यतृप्तम्······। SB. I. i. 4.
4. गृहीतत्वे आत्मैकत्वे बन्धमोक्षादिसर्वव्यवहार परिसमाप्तिरेव······। SB. I. ii. 6.

vanishes when one is awake, the world ceases to exist in the state of release. Nothing empirical remains in the state of release. When the illusory is negated, only the Real remains.[1] In release it is the adjuncts of avidyā which vanish, not the Self.[2]

3. Divine Grace and Individual Efforts

It is generally agreed that left to himself the individual is not capable of attaining the vision of the Infinite. It is not the choice of the individual but the choice of the Infinite which prevails in the understanding of the Infinite.[3] Throughout the chain of causal relation, beginning right from Lord's sportive act to the sakala state of the bound soul, the individual is wholly dependent upon God. Both the theories, the 'monkey' salvation and the 'cat' salvation, concerning the role of significance of individual efforts, emphasize in their own way the importance of both the individual efforts and Divine Grace. While in the former case the monkey child saves itself by hanging on to its mother through its own efforts, in the latter case the kitten merely surrenders itself to the mother. Though surrender is the ultimate goal in all spiritual traditions, the individual also has to make some efforts.

According to the Śaiva Absolutist, the absolute is spontaneously realized by him on whom the higher grace of God has fallen. Here the individual efforts do not play any part. For, the individuality and everything else being essentially a manifestation of Māyā, which is the principle of obscuration and is, therefore, unilluminative like darkness, cannot be a means to the knowledge of pure luminosity which is beyond Māyā.[4] Divine Grace is the fifth and the

1. Ibid. I. ii. 12, 20; Saṁkara's Comm. on Mandukya Up. II. 7.
2. उपाधिप्रलयम् एवाऽयम् नात्मप्रलयम् । Ibid. II. i. 14.
3. Kaṭha. Up.
4. यद्यपि श्रायातदृढेश्वरशक्तिपातस्य स्वयमेवेयमियती परमशिवभूमिरभ्येति हृदयगोचरम्, न तु अत्र स्वात्माय: पुरुषकार: कोऽपि निर्वहति, सर्वस्य तस्य मायामयत्वेनान्धतमसप्रख्यस्यामार्यीयं शुद्धप्रकाश स्वप्रतिद्वान्द्वन प्रति उपायतानुपपत्तेः,...... । IPV. I. i. 1.

last act of the Supreme Power, which leads to the attainment of final release. Perfect freedom is attained only through Grace. Grace cannot be clearly conceived because it is different from the ordinary causal relation which is established by invariable concommitance and logical discontinuance in life. The essential nature of Grace is revealed only in liberation. Its miraculous nature is due to the operation of the supreme creative power, characterised by the bringing about of the impossible. It cannot be attained merely by hundreds of longings for the removal of the beginningless dark veil which hides the true nature of the Self.[1] 'Śaṇkara means one through whose favour one gets the recognition of the full play of consciousness, which is absolute and supreme bliss, and wherein all troubles cease completely. It is of the nature of Self.'[2]

Divine Grace, or *Śaktipāta*, leads the individual to the path of spiritual realisation. It is the only cause of Self-realisation and is independent of human effort.[3] Without it mere individual efforts cannot lead us anywhere. In fact, the Divine Grace is operative everywhere and at every time. The very desire for God arising in the heart of the individual presupposes the operation of Grace. The nature of Śaktipāta has been explained differently from different view-points. Some hold that it descends at the dawn of knowledge; others hold that the fire of knowledge burns all Karmas und prepares the ground for Śaktipāta. The fruits of Karmas, either in sequence or without it, cannot

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1. ···· तत्र तस्यैव भगवत: कारणत्वम् । एष व अनुग्रहलक्षणोऽन्त्य: पञ्चम: परमेश्वर: कृत्यविशेषः परपुरुषार्थप्रा।क:, तन्निबन्धनत्वात् परमार्थमोक्षस्य । Ibid.
2. SN. I. 1.
3. इत्थं श्रीशक्तिपातोऽयं निरपेक्ष इहोदित: । TA. VIII. 173.
······यावत् अनात्मनि देहादौ आत्माभिमानो न गलित:, तावत् स्वात्मप्रथारूपेऽपि जगति भेदप्रथामोहो न विलीयते; अतश्च अनात्मनि आत्माभिमानभ्रमविनाशात्, आत्मनि अनात्माभिमानभ्रा ित परमात्मैव स्वात्ममहेश्वरो भगवानेव विनाशयति, न अन्यस्य अत्र सामर्थ्यम् ।। PS. P. 87.

result in the absolute destruction of Karmas. Hence, as the experience of the fruits of Karmas cannot lead to the destruction of Karmas, knowledge alone can destroy them. But the problem arises as to how knowledge which destroys the Karmas can take place. If it is held that such knowledge arises due to Karmas, then knowledge itself becomes the fruit of Karmas.

Some hold *Karmasāmya* to be the real cause of the descent of Divine Grace. It is said that Śaktipāta takes place when two or more equally powerful Karmas oppose each other and, as a result, none of them can be operative. It happens when due to the gradual experience of Karmas, many Karmas become weak and the equally powerful and opposite Karmas are unable te produce their fruits. As a result of this no Karma can be experienced. However, on this view the difficulty arises that if the Karmas give rise to their fruits in sequence, there can be no conflict between various Karmas, for being subject to sequence the Karmas cannot be together. Nor can it be held that the Karmas give rise to the fruits simultaneously.

According to the dualistic followers of the Tantras neither knowledge nor Karmasāmya can be regarded as the cause of Śaktipāta. They hold *Mala Paripāka*, the maturation of impurities, to be the real cause of Śaktipāta. There can be no Śaktipāta when two opposite Karmas, e. g. religious and irreligious, intermingle. The fact is that when Mala becomes mature for destruction, Grace descends and Self is revealed in its true nature. The Lord sends the Jīvas into the world for the sake of Mala *Paripāka*. The differences in the nature of Śaktipāta are dependent mainly upon the differences in the degree to which the Mala becomes ripe.

But the theory of Mala Paripāka also does not provide a satisfactory answer to the problem. For, what is the cause of the maturation of Mala ? Neither Karma, nor knowledge, nor the Divine Will, can be regarded as the cause. If the Divine Will is supposed to be the cause, the question arises

whether the Divine Will itself is determined by some causes or not. There can be no particular cause for the Divine Will, nor can it be arbitrary. Hence Mala Paripāka can have no understandable cause. But it cannot be without a cause, otherwise, why does it take place now and not before or after ? In fact, none of the views according to which Mala Paripāka is uncaused can be acceptable.[1]

The notion of Mala Paripāka, however, brings home the fact that the Mala Śakti, the energy which impels the individual to indulge in phenomenal experiences, must be exhausted before the realisation of the Self takes place. The finite individual should surrender itself before the Infinite. Before the revelation of the absolute Ego takes place, the finite ego should be dissolved. Illustrations, such as the ripening of the cataract or of the mango fruit, are often given to point out the nature of Mala Paripāka. Simultaneously, with the maturation of impurities, emerges the feeling of 'nothingness,' the realisation of one's utter poverty and God's absoluteness. Without this feeling of 'nothingness' there can be no descent of grace, But it does not mean that the operation of grace is conditional. For, free grace constitutes the very nature of the Divine. Even the maturation of Mala itself takes place due to grace.

The maturation of Mala takes place in two ways. Firstly, time itself is responsible for the maturation. It is found to be the chief cause of the exhaustion of the energies of the finite soul. After passing through the various phases of birth, development etc. things come in due course to their natural end. The other method might be described as the method of artificial maturation. It consists in the soul's passing through the unique and intense experience of pain, suffering, humiliation etc. During such moments of 'existence' the impurities of the soul are quickly ripened. In ordinary life also it is seen that

1. Kaviraj, G., *Bhāratiya Sanskṛti aur Sādhanā*, pp. 222-35.

suffering destroys all finite weaknesses and reveals the stronger and finer elements in man more quickly than is normally possible. Suffering is the quickest and surest means of enlightenment. The path of misery and suffering, of obstacles and hurdles, is the shortest and surest path to self-realisation. This artificial maturation, or 'shock therapy,' has been specifically employed in the Tāntric tradition. It constitutes the distinctive feature of certain Śaiva and Śākta disciplines. It is supposed that through powerful shocks the knots or bonds of finitude are dissolved immediately. To bring about an early maturation, sometimes the best thing is to indulge in highly immoral and unsocial acts and become an object of extreme humiliation, abuse and ridicule in the eyes of society. As a result of this, within a very short time the Mala will be washed away completely. Through this artificial method the process of maturation, which could have taken ages, may often be completed within a few moments. In effect, it only means the complete surrender of the ego. When the finite soul surrenders itself it is not just left hanging in the air. As soon as the surrender takes place, the infinite takes care of the finite.

Abhinava Gupta arrives at the conclusion that Grace is absolutely undetermined and unconditioned. If it were dependent upon some conditions, it would not be absolute and independent grace. It is the uncaused cause of the release of the soul. What appears at first as the condition of grace is in reality the consequence of it. The postulation of conditions or qualifications would be against the doctrine of free will of the absolute which carries on the sport of self-bondage and release.[1] While the three cosmic functions, creation etc., are governed by the law of Karma, self-concealment and self-revelation (*nigraha* and *anugraha*) depend entirely upon the free will of the Lord. The learned men of all times always hold that the descent of grace does not have any cause or condition. Divine

1. Mālinī Vijaya Vārtika, Ślokas, 611-90: PS. Kārikā 31.

Grace has been classified into various types as slow, fast, faster (*Manda, Tīvra, Tīvratara*) etc., depending upon the nature of its intensity.[1] Throughout all these forms, it is the Lord who illumines His own nature. In reality, there is no other cause of these manifestations except His freedom, which alone gives rise to bhoga or mokśa.[2]

The Vedānta Absolute is unrelated to the world of becoming. The five functions do not *really* belong to Brahman. Accordingly, Brahman is neither the cause of bondage nor of freedom in the absolute sense. Ultimately, it is avidyā which is the cause of bondage and also of release. As the false appearance of the snake leads to the discovery of the rope, likewise the world itself becomes a means to release. This manifestation of the world by Īśvara may be regarded a free act of grace. In the realm of Avidyā, the Jīva is blinded and is unable to realise his true nature. The release of the individual can only take place through knowledge, proceeding from the grace of Brahman.[3] The knowledge which helps the individual in becoming free from the bonds of Māyā and in rejecting all appearances as illusory can arise only through the spiritual discipline prescribed in the Vedānta. All that is spiritually valuable in the world is a manifestation of the power of Īśvara. In all such cases of power and glory, Īśvara appears in forms suitable for worship.[4] Brahman can be known only through the traditionally handed down teachings of the Scriptures and not through reasoning, eloquence, deep learning, ascetic practice or sacrifice.[5] Without association with a teacher, there can be no *Śravaṇa* of the Holy texts.[6] For, mind by itself is not an instrument for the knowledge of the Self, nor even for the removal of Āvidyā.[7]

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1. TA., VIII. 163,
2. कथम् एष दुर्निवारो महामोहो देहादिप्रमातृतासमुत्थ: प्रलीयते ? इति भगवतस्वातन्त्र्यमेव अत्र हेतु: ' । PS. p. 71.
3. SB. III. iii. 41, NS. III. 57.
4. Ibid. I. 1. 11.
5. Śaṁkara's Comm. on Kena Up. I 3.
6. NS. II. 7.
7. NS. II. 11, 15, 16.

If final release depends upon Divine Grace, what is the use of individual efforts ? If the individual is really identical with the absolute, there is no need of making efforts ; and if he is different from the absolute, no amount of efforts can bring about the identity. According to the Śaivite, however, these difficulties do not arise in the Śaiva Absolutism. Bondage and release are significant only for one who is conscious of the limitations of finite existence.. If the individual realises that he is identical with the absolute, the problem does not exist for him. With regard to the difficulty as to how can the unconditioned and absolute grace be reconciled with the efforts on the part of the individual, the Śaivite holds that the descent of grace presupposes the capacity for its reception in the recipient souls. The Tantras, attempting to reconcile grace with individual efforts, hold that so long as the individual lives in the attitude of finite egoity, he is entirely responsible for his acts. However, as soon as he gives up the feeling of being finite agent *(aham kartṛtva bhāva)*, he ceases to be responsible for his acts. If the individual does not put up best efforts due to either laziness or ignorance, nobody can help him. But if it is a case of real helplessness or complete surrender, then blindfolded he will be led to his ultimate destiny by the Divine grace.

Here, the question arises that if Divine Grace has no regard for the merit and demerit of the recipients, does it not amount to an act of partiality on the part of God ? How is it that He favours some individuals by bestowing His grace and disfavours others by keeping them away from it ? In short, why does he choose some and reject others ? Such questions are however based upon two presuppositions : firstly, it has to be presumed that the Divine Grace is undetermined, otherwise, it would imply that the Lord is not free. Secondly, grace cannot descend without any reason or rhyme for, otherwise, it would become arbitrary. In short, the difficulty arises because of two mutually conflicting beliefs : grace appears to be unconditioned and, at the same time, it seems

that it must have some cause. But it is wrong to suppose that Divine Grace should have a cause or a condition. On the contrary, the fact is that Grace is operative all the time on all the individuals. The differences in the descent of Grace are really the differences in the receptivity of the individuals. The cloud rains equally on different fields, but the productivity of the fields depends upon their fertility. Moreover, this problem does not have much significance in the absolutistic systems. It is the absolute who himself appears first as bound, and then as liberated, owing to His free will. He cannot be blamed for partiality because it is He who favours or rejects Himself.

4. Means of attaining release

Both the Śaivite and the Vedāntin emphasize the importance of spiritual initiation or *dīkśā* for attaining release. Spiritual knowledge can be achieved by the individual only when he is initiated by a Guru. Dīkśā is an act whereby the spiritual knowledge is imparted and the bondage of innate ignorance is removed. It is a revelation by the Guru of the highest Reality. It is a process of grace or a manifestation of the connection between Jīva and Īśvara, finite and Infinite, a divinization of the individual. The descent of grace is for the sake of initiation, and initiation is for the sake of gaining release. The intellectual knowledge which arises on hearing the Scriptures destroys the intellectual ignorance and starts the process of liberation in life. But one who does not have initiation cannot attain intellectual knowledge, for he does not have the right (*adhikāra*) to study the Śāstras. Hence in order to have the true knowledge of the Self, initiation is essential.[1] By himself, the individual is unable to destroy the innate ignorance. No amount of meritorious deeds can lead to the dissolution of *pauruṣa ajñāna*. It can be removed only through dīkśā, which is the process of joining the finite with the Infinite. Just as the origin of the pauruṣa

1. Kaviraj, G., *Bhāratīya Saṁskṛti aur Sādhanā* p. 150.

ajñāna is independent of the individual, likewise its dissolution also does not depend upon the efforts of the individual.

Although the authorship of the fivefold functions is ever latent in every individual, nevertheless, it does not shine forth without the instruction of a good teacher. Hence one ought to approach a teacher respectfully so that it may become manifest. Again, one who has no knowledge without the teaching of a wise guru, is deluded due to the concealment of his own nature through his own Śaktis.[1] In reality, guru is not wholly different from the individual. The guru represents the higher consciousness of the disciple. Accordingly, it is one's own consciousness which reveals the truth.[2] Thus dīkśā also is nothing but the self-revealing consciousness of the individual himself. It is his own higher self which appears as a guru. That is why the guru is called faith. He is of the nature of Īśvara. For, none else has the capacity to lift the individual from the fetters of Māyā. Like Īśvara, guru has both knowledge and ignorance. That is how he can impart knowledge to the ignorant disciple. Though he has knowledge, yet he is also aware of the ignorance on the part of the pupil. Guru only lights the lamp of knowledge by making the disciple recognize his own nature. Fire burns the wood only because the latter already contains fire potentially. While other qualities might be imparted from outside, perfection cannot be a gift. It is only a manifestation of the unmanifest. If we start with the assumption of separation between *jīvatva* and *Īśvaratva*,we cannot arrive at their identity. The Jīva can never become Īśvara if the two are really different. The Īśvara also, similarly, cannot descend to the level of Jīva. If, however, we begin with the assumption of their identity, the Jīva can become one with Īśvara. He has

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1. ईदृशं च पञ्चविधकृत्यकारित्वं सर्वस्य सदा संनिहितमपि सद्गुरूपदेशं बिना न प्रकाशते, इति सद्गुरुपर्युपासनैव एतत्प्रथार्थम् अनुसर्तव्या ॥ PH. XI. TA. I. 80

2. TA. IV. 101.

merely to recognise the identity. Īśvara himself is the Guru and whatever the Guru has is already possessed by the disciple, who does not recognize this fact. By making him recognise his true nature, the Guru awakens Īśvaratva in the Jīva like the lamp which illumines other lamps.

Thus the Pauruṣa Ajñāna is removed through proper initiation alone. The innate ignorance is twofold : firstly the powers of the Self are hidden and secondly, the individual is also ignorant of the possession of these powers.[1] For attaining final release both these forms of ignorance should be removed. The first is removed through Dīkśā and the second through the study of the Śāstras. Pauruṣa Jñāna, which takes place only through Dīkśā, is that perfect knowledge which arises when innate ignorance is completely destroyed. It is beyond speech and thought and can only be realised through direct experience.[2] However, mere initiation without the help of intellectual knowledge cannot bring about final release. Hence, intellectual knowledge (*bodha jñāna*) might be regarded as more important than spiritual knowledge attained through Dīkśā.[3] Through it the individual realises unity or identity with the universe and transcends all differences.[4] Because of the proximity of external objects, which are real according to the Śaivite, there arises a corresponding difference in the *bodha jñāna*. Though there is difference in the bodha jñāna due to the proximity of different objects, the ground or support of this knowledge, the ātman, always shines as pure unity. This pure eternal and unmodified knowledge is called pauruṣa jñāna.[5]

The integral method

The Śaiva Absolutist makes a vigorous attempt at synthesizing knowledge and action. While the Vedāntin appears

1. Pandey. op. cit. p. 311.
2. TA. I. 78-9
3. Ibid. I. 83.
4. Ibid. 81-2.
5. Kaviraj, G., *Bhāratīya Saṁskṛti aur Sādhanā*, p. 46.

to be more interested in relegating duty, devotion and worship to a lower realm or inferior status, the Śaivite aims at giving them equal importance with knowledge. The path which he propounds is neither the dry path of knowledge nor the path of blind devotion devoid of knowledge. He works out a complete harmony of knowledge and devotion. Liberation is the state of attainment of consciousness-bliss, or the rapture of supreme egoity. The element of consciousness in it represents knowledge and the bliss stands for devotion. Accordingly, it is the state of perfect *Sāmarasya* of consciousness and freedom. It is the supreme Self-consciousness which is the basis of all devotion. But according to the Vedāntin, devotion always involves dualism and hence belongs to the realm of Avidyā. Action, far from getting rid of nescience, presupposes it.[1] The Scriptures do not prescribe action for obtaining the bliss of the Self. Ultimately, it is erroneous knowledge which is associated with action.[2]

While the Vedāntin and others aim at the realisation of *Kaivalya* alone, the Śaivite believes that it is not the highest state of release. To attain the Perfect Self, we have to adopt the integral method of affirming the Self in everything. Only through an assimilation of the object (*idam*) in the subject (*aham*) perfection can be attained. What we attain through the method of discrimination is not the highest but the pure Self. The highest release consists in the realisation of the identity of the subject and object, Brahman and Māyā, Śiva and Śakti. The initiate should constantly strive to assimilate the Self. After its initial rejection, the not-self should be affirmed in the Self in the final state. First, employing the negative method, one should discern between what is 'mine' and what is 'I'. The Self is something different from all that can be considered as 'mine'. This something different is the essence of Self. One should 'meditate over this in a lonely corner and turn away from all that appears as 'mine'.[3] One should think seriously about his body: 'It is

1. NS. I. 28.
2. Ibid I. 60.
3. Tripurārahasya, p. 47.

covered by flesh, full of blood, joined by muscles and plastered by skin. It is all pervaded by cough, phlegm, etc. and the inside is full of dirt and urine'. How strange that a man full of dirt thinks himself to be beautiful, one that is made out of blood and semen and brought out through the passage of dirt'. What difference is there between a worm loving his dirt and one loving such a body ? This is also the case with other objects of enjoyment. Just think closely what happens to sweets and tasty food one takes so much and eats with so much relish. There is only one result dirt'.[1]

After the employment of such negative method, the whole activity in the world appears as tasteless as reminders of sugarcane from which juice has been extracted. But this is only the first step. In order to realise the ultimate unity one should try to see non-difference in the difference of manifestations and see them as one with the Self. Practical life is not a positive obstruction on the way to union with the Highest Lord.[2] When the six cloaks which cover the absoluteness of soul are stripped from it, there arises the identity of the individual with the universe. The consciousness arises in him that 'I am composed of thought and bliss of Supreme Unity, mine is this universe, which is merely the evolution of my powers.'[3]

Depending upon the degree in which the Divine Grace has fallen upon him, the initiate adopts a particular means for self-realisation. Four successive means of attaining release have been prescribed in Śaivism. They are called *Āṇavopāya*, *Śāktopāya*, *Śāmbhavopāya* and *Anupāya*.[4] All of these *upāyas* do not directly lead to self-rellisation. The

1. Ibid, Jñānakānda, Chap. IX.
2. घटगताभासभेदाभेददृष्टिरेव च परमार्थाद्वयदृष्टिप्रवेशे उपाय: समवलम्बनीय:, न तु व्यवहारोऽपि अयं परमेश्वरस्वरूपानुप्रवेशविरोधी, इति प्रतिपादितम् ॥ IPV. II. iii. 13.
3. परमाद्वयचिदानन्द ।घनोऽस्मि, ममैव इदं विश्वं स्वशक्तिविजृम्भणमात्रम् । PSK. 18,
4. TA. I. 258.

preceding one among them leads to the succeeding one and, accordingly, only the last, viz. Anupāya, can be regarded as the direct means of release.[1]

Those who live mostly in a dual consciousness have to follow *āṇavopāya*, or the lowest path. Such individuals are dominated by the thought of the objects. The path which they follow is essentially the path of action, which is also called *Kriyopāya*. External forms of worship such as the worship of the images, the recitation of the Mantras etc. are predominant in this path. The *Śāktopāya* is also called *jñānopāya*, because knowledge plays an important role in this path. Here the main attempt of the initiate is to realise the Self through knowledge. Meditation and contemplation over the identity of the individual and the universe lead to self-realisation. Through purification of the determinate ideas (*vikalpas*), pure knowledge is aroused in the soul.[2]

The *Śāmbhavopāya*, which is also called *Icchopāya*, is the path in which self-realisation is attained through the mere exercise of will. Here there is a predominance of will over all other aspects of experience. Observance of external discipline, meditation or contemplation etc. are not regarded as important in this path. It might be compared to the state of experience which immediately precedes the emergence of deep sleep.[3]

Anupāya is the path wherein very little effort is made. It might be compared to the state of consciousness preceding the immersion into the Fourth state. Being the highest state of Śāmbhavopāya, it has also been often referred to as Śāmbhavopāya. As the experience of Bliss is predominant in it, it is also called as *Ānandopāya*.

As constituting the recognition of the true nature of the Self, it is also called *Pratyabhijñopāya*.[4] Pratyabhijñā enables the individual in attaining self-realisation without

1. Ibid. 203, 255-6.
2. PH. pp. 75-78.
3. TA. I. 235.
4. TA. II. 39-40.

being initiated.[1] In a way it represents an unique synthesis of all the *Upāyas*. It is also called *Ananyopāya* and *Ātmopāya*.

Pratyabhijñā, or recognition of the Lord, means shining as facing oneself of what was forgotten. It is not that the consciousness of the Self has never been a fact of experience; because the Self always shines. The fact is that the Self appears as limited through its own power. Recognition consists in the unification of what appeared once with what appears now as in the judgment, 'it is the same Caitra'.[2] As regards the question, whether there is any mark appropriate to Śiva state by which the Self even in the state of worldly existence may be recognised as Śiva Himself appearing in that condition, it is pointed out that the authorship of the fivefold functions is manifest even in that state.[3]

However, obstinate insistence on a particular means is not right. For, the ultimate goal to be realised is nothing but one's own consciousness and all means ultimately lead to this goal. One should enter into that path which is most suitable to him [4] Although there are many means, such as the disappearance of Vikalpa, contraction or unfolding of Śakti, cutting of both the *Bāhas*, and so on, no strict adherence to any one of them can be advocated. Though not taught in the doctrine of Pratyabhijñā, many of these means are communicated because they belong to the sacred tradition. It is the Śaivite's opinion that if many means are enlisted, they might suit persons of different tastes and temperaments.[5]

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1. Ibid. VIII. 107.
2. प्रत्यभिज्ञा च-भातभासमानरूपानुसंधानात्मिका, स एवायं चैत्र···। IPV. I. i. 1, Bhāskarī vol. I. pp, 34-4.
3. ननु संसार्यवस्थायाम् अस्य किंचित् शिवतोचितम् अभिज्ञानमस्ति येन शिव एव तथावस्थित:?—इत्युद्घोष्यते। अस्ति-इत्याह
   तथाति तद्वत् पञ्चकृत्यानि करोति। PH. pp. 61-63.
4. Paryanta Pañcāśika, 50.
5. वहुषुहि प्रदर्शितेषु कश्चित् केनचित् प्रवेक्ष्यति इति। PH. 18.

The Śaive Absolutist propounds the new path when he advocates Anupāya or Pratyabhijñopāya as the highest means of self-realisation. The chief characteristic of this new path consists in the fact that in it the very thing which deludes or binds the ignorant is employed as a means for self-realisation.[1] Jagadānanda, the bliss of the world, itself is considered as the highest form of bliss. To the liberated soul, the entire world appears to be Śiva Himself. The initiate should enjoy everything that is enjoyable. One should be busying onself with the phase of unfolding of joy. Under this are included tasting and the other enjoyments of the beautiful sensuous objects. Out of the blossoming of bliss which savours of the pleasure caused by eating and drinking will bring forth a state of fulfilment and great bliss. Thus, everything else also is to be sanctioned as far as it fills one's own self with bliss.[2] A Yogin who has reached union with that incomparable bliss which consists in the enjoyment of music and other sense objects, possesses identity in essence with the Supreme Bliss. He who realises fully that 'All these riches are mine' possesses absolutenss (*Māheśvarya*), even when the determinate thoughts arise in him, for then he is essentially identical with all. The different devotee may however, adopt different attitudes towards the Divine Śakti in order to please Her.[3]

The Upāyas are also called *Samāveśa*, which means merging of the individual self in the Absolute Self. It

1. समस्तसंपल्लक्षणो व्याख्यातो योऽर्थः पूर्वं पुण्यपापादौ संसारमूलकारणे हेतुः स एव प्रत्यभिज्ञायते अनया-इति करणव्युत्पत्या उपायः इह लोकोत्तर-मार्गं प्रति निर्णीतः,'''। Bhāskarī, I. pp.40-1
2. PH. pp. 90-4.
3. 'Individuals with Rajas, Tamas and Sattva characteristics will require different disciplines. These three types are known in the Tāntric vocabulary as Vīra, Paśu and Divya. The devotee may assume various attitudes towards Śakti in order to propitiate her: The attitude of a handmāid, a hero, or a child. Zimmer. op. cit. p. 588.

represents a complete reversal of the process of manifestation. Āṇavopāya stands for the manifestation of Kriyā Śakti, Śāktopāya for Jñāna Śakti, Śāmbhavopāya for Icchā Śakti and Anupāya for Ānanda Śakti. These levels of immersion also correspond to the four states of experience, such as waking, dreaming, etc.[1]

The *sthitis*, i. e., the inward cessation of all *Darśanas*, i. e., the experience of 'blue', 'pleasure', etc.' become a means of the manifestation of the essential nature of Śiva who is Consciousness and Bliss. Even so, whenever the external form comes to rest in its essential nature (subject), there comes to be a cessation of the external thing, i. e. resting in a condition of inner peace. When re-absorbing the object, Consciousness flashes in her own nature. She makes her devotees one with herself when they resort to the re-absorption of the objects more and more.[2] The fact is that Consciousness being ever present, self-evident and already attained, none can attain or find it. Like something which is not visible due to darkness, and becomes visible when light is brought, the Self becomes manifest at the dawn of knowledge. All that we have to do is to feel ourselves into that state which is ever present. It is something which is in between the state before we saw darkness and the state of our straining our mental faculties.[3]

5. The Liberated Soul

The possibility of gradual release (*Krama Mukti*) has been accepted in the Śaiva Absolutism. When grace descends, Prakāśa or *Śivatva* becomes equally manifest in all the realising souls. However, there still remains difference between these souls as regards the achievement of Svātantrya. The degree of achievement of Svātantrya depends upon the extent to which the objects are assimilated in the

1. IPV. III. II. 11-12.
2. एषा च भट्टारिका क्रमात्क्रमम् अधिकमनुशील्यमाना स्वात्मसात्करोत्येव भक्तजनम् ॥ PH. VIII.
3. Tripurārahasya, p. 52.

Self. Final release consists in the attainment of Perfect freedom, wherein the entire objectivity is assimilated in the subject. The process of this assimilation is just the reverse of the process of manifestation of objectivity. Accordingly, the progress towards the attainment of release is characterised with more and more inwardization and universalization of the 'vision' and a corresponding realisation of Svātantrya. Finally, when the objective is completely absorbed, the bipolarity of the subject and object ceases to be manifest and the soul attains the state of Sāmarasya. This constitutes the realisation of supreme Self (*Pūrṇa aham*). 'Resting of all objective consciousness within oneself is what is meant by 'I' feeling. This resting is called sovereignty of will, primary doership and lordship because of the cancellation of all relational consciousness and of dependence on anything outside oneself. This 'I' feeling is the source of all power, for all Mantras arise from and come to rest in it, and by its power all activities are performed.[1] The objects of knowledge and the knowing process are not different from the knowing consciousness to such a realised soul. It transcends the triad of knower, known and knowing. It no longer lives like a Paśu, because Paśutva is nothing in itself except the mistaking of the subject and the object. To the realised soul, everything previously known as external appears as internal. He who knows the Self fears nothing, for the whole universe is his native form. Nor does he grieve, for in the Supreme variety there is no perishing.[2]

Beside gradual release, Śaivite also accepts the possibility of immediate release. In the case of immediate release, God

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1. एषैव च अहन्ता सर्वमन्त्राणाम् उदयविश्रान्तिस्थानत्वात् एतद्बलेनैव च तत्तदर्थक्रियाकारित्वात् महती वीर्यभूमि: । PH. pp. 97-98

2. आत्मज्ञो न कुतश्चन
विभोति सर्वं हि तस्य निजरूपम् ।
नैव च शोचति यस्मात्
परमार्थे नाशिता नास्ति ॥ PS. Kārikā 58

Himself is the direct prompter. In such cases, the individual immediately attains the highest state of release without passing through any process or stage. However, such a realisation is not very common.

When through the reflection, contemplation and other methods ignorance is destroyed, the individual attains the Self in his life-time (*jivanmukta*). 'He who has burst the bond of ignorance, whose doubts have passed away, who has overcome delusion, for whom merit and demerit and guilt have alike vanished, is redeemed, though he may be still united with the body.[1] The Yogin thus redeemed still lives on in the flesh for the benefit of the fellow creatures until his final redumption on death. 'Thus, the consciousness, lastingly purified by the instruction of the good teacher, reveals itself in the form of Lord Śiva when it is released from the surrounding medium of the body and is ever free from all conditions.'[2]

Liberation as Purnatva

According to the Śaivite, in *Kevala Mukti*, the state of release as admitted in the Sāṁkhya, Vedānta etc., there is only the removal of ignorance. Although the superimposition of the not-self upon the Self is removed through discriminatory knowledge, it does not constitute the state of absolute release. For, there is no realisation of the

1. भिन्नाज्ञानग्रन्थि—
    गतसन्देह: पराकृतभ्रान्ति: ।
   प्रक्षीणपुण्यपापो
    विग्रहयोगेऽप्यसौ मुक्त: ॥ Ibid. 61,
   चिदानन्दलाभे देहादिषु चेत्यमानेष्वपि चिदैकात्म्य-प्रतिपत्तिदार्ढ्यं-जीवन्मुक्ति: ॥ PH. XVI. अविचला, चिदेकत्वप्रथा, सैव 'जीवन्मुक्ति:'—जीवत प्राणान् अपि धारयतो मुक्ति:; Ibid p. 80,
2. एवं सद्गुरुशासन
    विमलस्थिति वेदनं तनूपाधे: ।
   मुक्तमप्युपाध्यन्तर-
    शून्यमिवाभाति शिवरूपम् ॥ PS.Kārikā 88.

perfect and supreme Self in this state. Even when the innate ignorance is removed, there are further stages through which the souls have to pass before attaining *Pūrṇatva.* Firstly, the unmanifest has to become manifest through initiation by the Guru. But Guru only reveals the highest nature of the Self. The lower self still remains discarded. Final realisation is possible only when the complete nature of the Self is realised. Though there might be release after death, there can be no release in life unless the universal Self is grasped through intellect. When through various disciplines, Buddhi becomes purified, the realisation of the Self becomes possible in the intellect itself. Hitherto the intellect has been concealing the nature of the Self, but now it assumes transparency and reflects the pure Self. Yet, even in this state of release, there is no manifestation of the capacity to perform the five functions, as there is still an absence of *Śvātantrya.* Hence final release would take place only when absolute freedom or Pūrṇatva becomes manifest in the soul. This alone would constitute complete and final release.

The chief characteristic of release, according to the Śaivite consists in the manifestation of absolute perfection or freedom. The attainment of *Pūrṇatva* consists in the realisation of non-difference in sensuous enjoyment and spiritual release (*Bhoga* and *Mokśa*). Release in life is nothing but equanimity between Bhoga and Mokśa. When the experiencer and the experienced become one, their unity might be referred to both as Bhoga and Mokśa.[1] Indeed, the equanimity in the experience of Bhoga and Mokśa alone constitutes Jīvanmukti. According to Maheśvarānanda this might be regarded as the chief characteristic of Śaiva Absolutism.[2] The achievement of Pūrṇatva varies with the degree in which self-consciousness becomes manifest. In other words, the realisation of Pūrṇatva

1. तस्या: भोक्ता: स्वातन्त्रायाभोग्येकीकार एष य: ।
स एव भोग: सा मुक्ति: स एव परमं पदम् ।। Prabodha pañcadaśika.
2. Mahārthamañjari, p. 171.

depends upon how much consciousness has become all-inclusive. It is also related to the dissolution of the knots of finite egoity. That is why, all individuals do not attain freedom equally, though all are recipients of Divine Grace. All released souls equally achieve omniscience, but all do not attain omnipotence equally and fully. Even Īśvara does not have complete Pūrṇatva, which can be attained only in the state of Parama Śiva.

Realization of Purna aham

In the state of release, the Yogin realises his identity with the whole universe and attains Perfect and Supreme Egoity. The individual who has the cognition of identity and regards the universe to be a sport and is always united with it, is undoubtedly liberated in life.[1] To him the entire objective world appears merely as a reflection in the Self. Though the world appears different, it is really non-different like the reflection of the city in a mirror. The released soul looks upon the universe as his own self. To him the entire universe appears as Bliss and identical with Vimarśa. 'When Spirit and Bliss are attained, release in life means lasting acquisition of the condition in which 'cit' is our only self-let the body and other physical objects still be noticeable.[2] The released soul realises that the universe consists in the unfolding of his own nature, so says the sacred tradition concerning them. But those who are unable to realise their identity with the objects remain bound.[3] The knowledge referred to in the Upaniṣadic passage. 'The Self should be known' consists in the recognition of the Self as essentially identical with Śiva. It does not consist in the knowledge, as the Vedāntin mistakenly holds. 'This whole is Purusa' (Witness Consciousness)'[4]. When the consciousness that 'Even this determinate cognition is nothing but my glory, known as the power of freedom' grows firm, the individual becomes liberated in his very

1. SN. II. 5.
2. PH. XVI.
3. PH. p. 53.
4. तत्रैदमेव सर्वज्ञ सर्वकर्तृस्वातन्त्र्य शिवस्वरूपतया ...। SN. II. 6-7.

life, even though his Vikalpas might not have been destroyed. 'That is surely a state of freedom from doubt, in which even doubt is not doubted.'[1] The Yogin realises that all activity of the mind evolves from the Supreme Power and that the universe is really absolute being identical with the Absolute. This true conception figures in his consciousness by the activity of the mind. He sees that the Universe revealed to him in modes of imagination as an operation of the mind is real and identical with the light, for conscious is present in it through and through.[2] As the potter's wheel continues to revolve for a short time after his hand has been withdrawn, so the Yogin for a while continues to live on in the flesh in a state of absolute bliss, because he is conscious of being the subject of universal thought in all conditions.[3]

The difference between the bound and released souls is that while the bound understands and experiences the objects as different from himself, the released looks upon them as one with himself. The Yogin regards himself to be identical with the Absolute Ego, which is the prompter of all subjects from Sadāśiva to a worm. Accordingly he thinks, 'All that can be an object of cognition in the universe is also mine, similarly, what is my object of cognition, the same is the object of cagnition of all beings in the universe. That object is a part of myself and so are others also.' Thus all figure in his consciousness as ultimately merged in the pure unity of the Self.[4] It is like the embrace of the dearest beloved for the first time, wherein one has no consciousness of the outer or inner, nor is one conscious of sleep. It is sheer awareness, pure consciousness and objectlessness. Similarly one also experiences a similar state when one expectedly gets what he was longing for, but what he thought unattainable. One falls into trance in such moments.[5]

1. IPV. IV. i. 12.
2. PS. Kārikā 77. ?
3. PH. XVI PS. p. 157.
   PS. p. 157.
4. IPV. IV. i, 13.
5. Tripurārahasya, p. 102.

Fully knowing the Self and its powers of knowledge and action, and realising the powers to be non-different from the Self, the released soul knows and does all that it desires.[1] He who knows the Self cares nothing, for the universe is his native form. Nor does he grieve, for in the Supreme Self there is certainly no perishing.[2] When the state of Lordship is attained with the rise of consciousness 'I am all', what misfortune can betide, and to whom ? The Yogin knows that the objects are essentially one with him and so cannot really change, therefore, he can have nothing to fear from them.[3]

The activities of a yogin, between the moment of enlightenment till the time of his physical death, are like those of a priest, as he accepts no fruits thenceforth for himself, they do not bear his name. Being inspired by the thought that he is one with absolute consciousness, the Yogin renounces all determinations. He renders himself one with the transcendental Self in which determinations vanish.[4] He finds his redemption in being one with the Supreme Self, because he thereby becomes the self of all beings and they become his self.[5]

He who knows the Self is not affected by merit and guilt but remains pure and perfect. Whatever good or bad work is done by him, bears no fruit for him. For, he performs it without any idea of being personally concerned with it as a subject or beneficiary. He does it with the consciousness of being merely an instrument of the Divine Will.[6] The works of merit and demerit accumulated during the time of ignorance, vanish through the powers of the flame of understanding. The Yogin's knowledge that he is the Absolute immediately destroys all

1. IPV. IV i. 15.
2. PS. Kārikā 58.
3. Ibid. 59.
4. Ibid. 68.
5. PS. Kārikā 69.
6. Ibid. 70.

the influence of the works previously done by him in the days of ignorance. He becomes no longer liable to pleasant or painful experiences of the body. The accumulated Karmas are not only destroyed, but for future too they become barren and produce no fruit. When knowledge dawns actions performed afterwards bear no fruit. The union with the bond of transmigration is broken and the realised soul is revealed in the lustre of the Self as pure light. As the seed stripped of involucre, bran, and awn puts forth no sprout, so the Self stripped of Ānava, Māyā and Karma, puts forth no sprout of physical life.[1] The works burned in the flame of knowledge are unable to cause rebirth as the seed scorched by fire is incapable of sprouting.

There is the fullest harmony and integration in the personality of the Yogin. For, conceit, joy and the rest of the passions arise from the illusion of differentiation, division or separation in the Self. How can he be affected by disintegration who has the vision of the Self ? All defilement implies a distinction between the agent, act and the object. But there is no such distinction in the case of the Yogin. For, the emotions, being realised as the aspects of the Self, become homogeneous with him. He has himself become the absolute Self and as such views all shings as neither desirable nor undesirable, but as one with himself.[2]

The Yogin does not have any need for external worship. His prayer is the intuition of supreme Egoity constantly applied to the universe.[3] The temple of the Yogin is his own body and the whole universe built of thirty-six tattvas and fully set with windows consisting of the bodily organism

1. तुष-कम्बुक-किशारुक-
मुक्तं बीजं यथाङ्कुरं कुरुते ।
नैव तथाणवमाया—
कर्म विमुक्तो भवाङ्कुरं ह्यात्मा ॥ Ibid. 55-7...Kārikā 57.
2. PS. Kārikā 72.
3. Ibid. 78.

or composed of jars etc. As a temple in which to worship the self, the Yogin has his own body and any external structure as well. For, the latter, he knows to be formed of the same elements as his own body. His own body is the temple or seat of consciousness. As the temple has windows, so the body has its organs of sense. The external material of sense, e. g. the objects of sight, such as jars etc.—are informed by consciousness through the agency of the appropriate organs, e. g., the eye, so that the whole phenomenal world is to the Yogin a temple of his own indwelling consciousness.[1]

A complete synthesis of devotion and knowledge has been the chief aim of Śaiva Absolutism. While worship leads to ultimate jñāna, true knowledge also leads to the devotional attitude. Worship in Śaivism assumes the form of self-worship. While there is no place for real worship in the Vedānta, it is given an ultimate status in Śaivism, where the attempt has been to establish the compatibility of devotion with Advaitism. Even in the state of final release, the soul may continue to worship the highest Self. To say that there is no place for devotion in Advaitism, because it presupposes dualism, is to take a wrong view of devotion. The devotion that arises after the dawn of the knowledge of the Absolute is an end in itself. It alone is the real devotion. Before the rise of knowledge duality produces delusion. But after its rise duality becomes manifest as supreme bliss. However, after the attainment of advaita, devotion does not necessarily arise in all released souls. It arises only in the hearts of those who are by nature inclined towards devotion. It need not arise in the case of those souls which by nature are inclined towards knowledge. But whether devotion arises or not, in the end knowledge

1. षट्त्रिंशत्तत्वभृतं
   विग्रहरचनागवाक्षपरिपूर्णम् ।
   निजमन्यदथ शरीरं
   घटादि वा तस्य देवगृहम् ॥ Ibid. 74.

and devotion will become one or merge into each other. *Pūrṇa Ahaṁtā*, or the rapture of supreme egoity, is the final state of knowledge as well as the highest culmination of devotion. That is why it is often described as the state of perfect integration, the fountainhead of both knowledge and devotion. In it, knowledge assumes the form of devotion, and devotion the form of knowledge. It is the state of Sāmarasya.[1]

Kāshmir Śaivism has revealed a profound truth by accepting devotion to be a *'rasa'*. Utpalācārya lays great emphasis upon this aspect of Śaiva Absolutism in his Śiva Stotrāvali.[2] The chief characteristic of such devotion (*parā bhakti*) is that, though in reality, there is no duality, duality is assumed for the sake of worship. This devotional experience is itself a perfect synthesis of unity and multiplicity. The idea is that no one who is not himself divine is qualified to worship the divinity. Having become the deity, one should worship the deity.

Here the question arises as to how the diversity of behaviour among the realised souls can be possible when the experience of realisation would be the same for all. According to Dattātreya, the diversity is due to three factors : intelligence, the kind of discipline used, and the past dispositions *(saṃskāras)*. The last is of three kinds : lack of faith in revelation, impurity of mind due to past Karmas and the craving for actions. And as there can be no purpose in the assumption of this difference, it has to be admitted that it arises due to the difference of taste, attitude or temperament[1]. Wise men could be graded into three categories : those with many minds, those with no mind, those with a single mind. While the first two are liberated in life, the last one are wise but liberated after death. Those belonging to the first grade burn ignorance with the fire of

1. Kaviraj, G., *Bhāratīya Sanskṛti aur Sādhanā*, p.

2. जयन्ति भक्ति पीयूष रसासवरोन्मदा अद्वितीयपि सदात्वद् द्वितीया अपि प्रभो: Utpala 's *Siva Stotrāvali* ।

knowledge. Since they have wisdom, they do not practise discipline. Naturally, their cravings and desires have not been burnt up. Though they crop up here and there after realisation, these desires do not obscure the light of knowledge. The Karmas are destroyed as soon as they arise. Their desires lead them to a varsiety of experiences in life, but they remain unaffected, for they are ever in the state of self-realisation. Outwardly, they seem to behave like all mortals, but in their depths they are untouched. The forces of past dispositions do not bother them. That is why, the diversity of behaviour is intelligible among them. King Janaka continued to rule, Vaśiṣtha was engaged in rituals, Durvāsā was ever full of rage. While Dattātraya lived in complete detachment, his own brother Candra, a realised soul, was given to a life of luxury and love.

A large part of the life of sages belonging to the second grade is spent in disciplining themeslves. They gain wisdom and realise the self, yet the past tendencies have still a hold on them, as they are mostly busy in overcoming the force of the tendencies, their sphere of activity is limited. They have periods of illumination and darkeess. As they are able to burn up their Karmas in the end, the periods of darkness are also finally destroyed. The last of their lives appear to be like that of a lunatic shut within himself. Vāmadeva and Jada Bharata are the typical examples of this class. The sages belonging to the last type have one track mind and are liberated only after death.

In the Vedānta action is supposed to be impossible on the part of the released soul which no longer identifies itself with the empirical factors of his personality. All adjuncts of the Self are destroyed in the state of release.[1] In final release the soul passes from the state of witness-consciousness to that of pure consciousness. Its witnesshood is merely imagined through vidyā.[2] When the association with the

1. Śaṁkara' s Comm. on Brh. Up. II. iv. 2; Chand. Up. VIII. xii. 3.
2. NS. II. 58.

samskāras is destroyed, the soul sinks into pure consciousness and is no longer aware of even the body which is carried on because of the momentum of the past saṁskāras.[1] The Yogin has a kind of double vision and dual personality residing in the world and outside it at the same time. It can also be compared to the parts played by the actor in the play. Like the actor, the yogin is not affected by these roles.

In the Śaiva approach, the liberated soul, by virtue of its attaining the state of absolute subject, does not lose its individuality. It realises the state of supreme 'I' in which all individual selves are realised as one with itself. Nothing is negated, but everything, including the negating consciousness, is included in the Self. In the Vedānta, on the other hand, the individuality being a product of nescience, is also destroyed at th destruction of the nescience.

1. S. B, III. iii. 32.

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